

THE CONVENTION OF THE  
AMERICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

WORKERS OF THE WORLD,  
UNITE!

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL



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# THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH DIEHARDS IN THE ANTI-SOVIET BLOC

By J. ERUKHIMOVICH

“WAR” is a most ill-omened word which does not forebode the pages of the bourgeois press, and is ever being mouthed by the statesmen throughout the bourgeois world. The approaching danger of a new world imperialist war becomes more and more tangible and clear from day to day. German fascism is feverishly preparing for “a grand decision by blood and iron”. Japanese militarism has been carrying on war against China for the past two and a half years, and does not make a secret of its intentions to turn this into a war against the U.S.S.R. The question of the repartition of the world is again on the order of the day. If German imperialism were to succeed in realizing its plans, it would mean the end of France as a great power. The independence of nearly every State in Western and Central Europe would vanish. The realization of the designs of the Japanese militarists would amount to this, that the great powers, first of all the United States and Britain, would be squeezed out of China and, later, out of the other countries in the Pacific. It is not hard to understand how great are the contradictions in the capitalist world, and how immense the proportions of approaching events. Nevertheless one must take into account that the interests of the chief imperialist powers in one or another part of the world—concretely in Europe and in Asia—are not identical. The whole power of modern France lies in its position in Europe. In German fascism’s aspirations she sees the greatest danger confronting her. The prime interests of British imperialism are outside of Europe: in Asia, Africa, Australia, etc. In these spheres Great Britain is menaced by her “friend”, Japan, which is encroaching in an ever greater degree on the spheres of influence of the United States.

Japanese imperialism has long been a “friend” of British imperialism, which is doing all possible to preserve Anglo-Japanese cooperation in the struggle against the U.S.A., the Chinese revolution, and the revolutionary movement of the toilers living in the oppressed countries of Asia. The imperialist interests of Japan, however, are spurring it on to new plunder in Asia when it comes up against the interests of British imperialism (primarily in China, but also in other Eastern markets). Japan is openly laying claim to domination in the western part of the Pacific Ocean, declaring as the sphere for its unlimited influence those countries in Eastern Asia, which are

most important from the point of view of the imperialist States. Therefore, while British imperialism is aiming at “friendship” with Japan, and does not want to be drawn into a premature war between the U.S.A. and Japan, nor desires to yield its own interests, it is actively working to direct the expansion of Japan northwards against the U.S.S.R. It hopes to achieve this by the promise of financial and political support, in which, as is well known in London, Japanese imperialism is very much interested.

Such in brief are the basic starting points of the foreign policies of the different capitalist powers at the present concrete period. And it is here that we have to seek the explanation for the improvement in Franco-Soviet relations, and for the increased activities of the anti-Soviet elements in Britain.

France is doing all possible to hinder the realization of the war designs of German fascism; she is taking great pains to prevent the outbreak of a war in Europe at the present moment. There is therefore nothing accidental in the fact that France found it necessary to withdraw from the anti-Soviet camp. The French bourgeoisie does not want war now. It understands on the basis of its capitalist interests that a successful struggle for peace in Europe, especially in the eastern and southern parts of Europe, cannot be waged without taking into account such a powerful and great factor for peace as the Soviet Union. The change which has taken place in the attitude of leading circles in France towards the Soviet Union has of course been pre-determined by the great depth of the imperialist contradictions, but this circumstance makes it possible for the Soviet Union to make use of the actual conditions to strengthen peace and to ensure the opportunity of peaceful labor for the builders of Socialism. The turn which has taken place in Franco-Soviet relations is an event which at the present time defines the entire world situation, in as much as Franco-Soviet collaboration in regard to the struggle for the preservation of peace impedes to a great degree the realization of the plans and intentions of the war-mongers who are feverishly straining themselves in Berlin and Tokio, encouraged in every way by London.

British imperialism, the most consistent and irreconcilable enemy of the toilers of the Soviet Union, places itself at the head of all the anti-Soviet forces. It is precisely Britain which is now the organizer of the anti-Soviet war, irrespective of the fact that both



the Japanese and the German imperialists, in preparing to attack the U.S.S.R., are pursuing their own independent predatory aims.

The British imperialists would like to bring about a new redivision of the world at the expense of the partition of China, the U.S.S.R. and the States which were formed after the war.

This, in actual fact, is the content of the predatory plan of the die-hards, which they modestly call "the creation of a new equilibrium" in Europe and Asia. *This is how they are trying in London to divert the attention of the Japanese and German imperialists away from the interests of Great Britain.* The center of gravity of these interests is outside of Europe. If the British die-hards none the less support the solicitations of German fascism, it is simply because *German fascism is the "natural" ally of Japanese imperialism.* The plan of British imperialism is therefore to reinforce the anti-Soviet war in the Far East with a war on the western frontiers of the U.S.S.R.

It stands to reason that none of the British diplomats speaks about this aloud. But the intentions of British imperialism are too clear by now, and the people who shape its foreign policy are too well known to leave room for doubt. Exceptionally symptomatic in this respect was the debate on foreign policy which took place in the House of Commons, March 18, and which is worth while dwelling on.

The British Laborites are now, as is well known, on the opposition bench and are compelled to look for popular slogans which are in some respects contrary to the policy of "their" imperialists. The question which now disturbs and worries the British masses most is the question of the danger of a new war. The Laborites are now to a certain degree making capital out of this, and thanks to this, as has been shown in the by-elections, they are receiving new votes at the expense of the Conservatives and Liberals. Under pressure from the masses, and for purposes of competition, the British Labor leaders are now compelled to put forward such "damned" questions as that about the Anglo-Japanese alliance. The Labor leaders would have liked to serve the masses with fables about "disarmament", etc., but this does not work. The Geneva "disarmament" comedy is ending. In this tense atmosphere even a simple parliamentary question in the House illuminates the situation very clearly.

The debate was opened by the representative of the opposition, the Labor Member Sir Stafford Gripps. We quote from his speech as reported in the *Times* of May 19:

"Sir S. Gripps said he wished to raise the question of the attitude of his Majesty's Government towards Japan in view of the very serious threat to the peace of the East and indeed the peace of

the whole world which had resulted from the actions of Japan during the last year. He also desired to give the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question in regard to the Disarmament Conference.

"The action of Japan in invading Manchuria and the incidents which took place at the same time in Shanghai were the first steps of a design by which Japan should gain preponderating power throughout the whole of the East. That design in its initial stages succeeded because of the weakness and vacillation of the governments who were represented on the League of Nations—in which weakness and vacillation our Government took a leading part. Since that time Japan had extended her conquests in the North of China. She had withdrawn from the League. . . .

"Following the withdrawal from the League of Nations, Japan was now engaged in converting Manchuria and Jehol into a great military base, with strategic roads and railways, ready for some further adventure. Japan constituted herself, on her own statement, as the judge of what benefited China and whether she should permit other countries to engage in technical or financial assistance to that country. They were left with the perfectly plain claim and assertion by the Japanese Government that she proposed to continue in her breach of the Nine-Power Treaty and to extend that breach throughout Northern China. *Apparently the British Government was allowing Japan to continue in breach of the obligations both under the Government and the Nine-Power Treaty.*

"As the *Times* put it, in a rather remarkable article in September, 1933: 'The goal of the Japanese is lordship of the Far East'. *If they were to judge from the outward appearance of the policy of this Government they would be led to believe that this country was either in league with Japan in her aggression or was turning a benevolently blind eye on her obligations and on the obligations of this country both under the Treaty and under the Covenant.* No nation would accept disarmament, because no nation could find security in the existing state of affairs, and it now seemed a possibility that the British Government was going to throw in its hand on the disarmament situation.

"*The government talked about security and said how necessary it was, but in fact they made security impossible by their actions with regard to Japan. As regarded Europe, the Government had refused all those measures which most people believed to be necessary to give reality to security as opposed to mere paper security, which no one now believed was likely to be effective.*"

The Conservative member, Admiral Rogers Keyes, replied to Gripps (we quote from the *Times*):

"Sir R. Keyes said that one thing was quite certain, *that if the policy which Sir S. Gripps and his friends so often urged was carried into effect*



*this country was eventually bound to be involved in a war with Japan.*

*"Japan was destined to play a very big part in the future of the East, and he was convinced that she would go forward to her destiny with unswerving determination. He had always thought that it was a deplorable mistake on our part to terminate our alliance with Japan, which was of immense value to us in the East with a guarantee of peace in Eastern waters. He recommended to the Government to do all that was in their power to return to the excellent understanding with Japan that existed in those days. We should have come to an understanding over commercial interests, and it would be of very great benefit to this Empire and to our interests in the East if we could come to a thorough and good understanding with Japan."*

Sir John Simon spoke after Keyes. This expert barrister knows how to raise a smoke screen, and now he made every effort to dwell at length on his "deep concern in the presence of an international situation which was felt to be full of difficulty and, it might be very threatening for the future". In Simon's speech one can find an answer to two questions: the question of the policy of British imperialism in the Far East and of its policy in Europe. From Simon's speech one can very definitely gather, in the first place, that leading circles in Britain *have no objection to the partition of China*. Here is what Simon said:

*"He [Sir John Simon] regretted as much as anybody that there had not been a greater measure of agreement between China and Japan in the Far East, but it was a complete confusion of ideas to suppose that in abstaining from seeking to apply sanctions anyone was departing from the Lytton Report or from the recommendations of the League of Nations itself. As regarded Sir S. Gripp's question, anyone who heard that question would have supposed that the Nine-Power Treaty contained some clause by which this country undertook to respect and preserve the integrity of Chinese territory. It contained no such clause. It was not true that we had ever signed, or that anyone else had ever signed a treaty with China in which we had pledged ourselves to use all our forces to preserve the integrity and political independence of China."*

It is not our responsibility to remind his Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs about Articles I and II of the Washington Nine-Power Treaty. What is important is that we are dealing with an indirect admission of an understanding regarding the partition of China and the violation of the Nine-Power Treaty by Japan. This is the real basis for Anglo-Japanese relations.

Simon also replied to another question, namely,

*about the boundaries of the European States. As is well known, British imperialism is doing its best to get the French government to agree to the rearming of German fascism and at the same time it is persistently refusing to guarantee the security of the boundaries established at Versailles, for which French diplomacy has striven. Britain has expressed her readiness to guarantee only the boundaries of France, thereby leaving the boundaries of the States in eastern and southwest Europe to the discretion of anyone who is striving for their revision, i.e., to the discretion of German fascism. As an experienced barrister, Simon did his best to formulate this part of his speech in terms as vague as possible. He even excused himself by saying that "he had had doubts as to whether it would be wise to say anything publicly from that box about it". We are not aware how the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs resolved his "doubt", but what he did say leaves us in no doubts as to British policy in the question which he so carefully evaded, namely the question of the revision of boundaries.*

*"Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations," Simon explained to his audience, "in general terms provided that members of the League undertook to respect and preserve the territorial integrity of all members of the League."*

In order to alter the boundaries of the League members, the Covenant of the League of Nations must be amended. Simon declared that he does not object to such a revision, but he is not convinced that they, whose boundaries are to be the subject of discussion, would agree. A shrewd fellow is this Sir John Simon! And if they object? What then? "Here was the problem, and he did not see the solution of it"—such was Simon's reply. This however, is only a lawyer's cunning, because Simon considered it necessary to issue the warning that if war breaks out, the British government will not seek to resort to the application of the sanctions, which the League Covenant provides, against those violating the Covenant, because the sanctions mean war, and British imperialism is against war! Sir John appealed to the House not to be disheartened by the reports on the arming of Germany and on the threatened breakdown of the Disarmament Conference. He ended his speech in these words:

*"I trust from the hopes that have been expressed here that some way may be found out of these terrible anxieties. I offer on behalf of the whole Government the assurance that nothing shall be found wanting in trying to continue to play our full part in saving the world from that what would undoubtedly be a most serious calamity—the breakdown of the conference and the disappointment of hopes which we have all entertained for such a long time. Do not let us take the fool-*



*ish view of supposing that if that happens it means the end of the world."*

And so the boundaries of China and of the States in the eastern and south-eastern parts of Europe are to be revised. If this results in war, the British bourgeoisie will not hinder the war instigators; and if the latter are now arming themselves and this threatens the breakdown of the Geneva Conference, then Simon, crushed though his soul may be, make a note of the sorry state of things and console himself in the knowledge that this does not quite mean the end of the world.

The fragments have been joined together. Before us we have the elements which go to make up the foreign policy of British imperialism, a policy of the unrestrained race for armaments, and of the incitement to war of those governments—fascist Germany and imperialist Japan—which are diligently seeking it. The tenor of Simon's speech made on May 30 at the session of the General Commission of the Disarmament Conference, in which he expressed himself in opposition to Comrade Litvinoff's proposals to guarantee peace and security, was in conformity with the spirit of that policy.

But we have at our disposal other facts which in no less degree testify to the present trend of British foreign policy. Just a few days before the parliamentary debate in the House of Commons, in the Viennese newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*, issue of May 17, there appeared an article by the London correspondent of this paper, H. P. Smolka, entitled: "England Face to Face with Momentous Decisions". Judging from the nature of the interview, it is not difficult to establish that through the person of H. P. Smolka, the opinions of the most influential circles of British imperialism are being expressed.

"England," says the correspondent, "is today confronted by two alternatives, for the solution of which great farsightedness and constructive abilities are necessary. This is especially so since once decisions have been reached, things cannot be left to develop spontaneously, but what is wanted is to hold fast to the line set, actively and diligently. The first group of decisions pertains to Europe, the second to Eastern Asia.

"In the first group England will have to choose between participation in the solution of the armaments question, or to completely turn its back on the conflicts taking place on the continent: If England chooses the road of active participation, then the harrassed John Bull will immediately be confronted by another problem, namely will he support Germany's demand for armaments and oppose France's theses about the sanctity of the treaties, which have become untenable, or will he conclude an alliance with France for the purpose of preventing Germany's rearming.

"If England decides to turn her back on the continent, then this will inevitably lead to an increase in naval and aerial armaments, because only if the British Isles are armed up to the statusphere will they, under the modern conditions of warfare, be able to feel themselves to some extent secure when they find themselves in the midst of a struggle which will shake Europe.

"And in Eastern Asia? Should the government give Japan a free hand against Russia and China and thereby free itself from competition on the textile market and simultaneously secure all British interests in Australia, India and New Zealand? Does MacDonald believe that Japan will be kept busy for a long time by her struggle in the Far East, or, at any rate, have her attention engaged in her aspirations for expansion, and let England alone?

"Or perhaps he fears that Japan, after conquering as wide a base as possible in Eastern Asia, will become a still greater menace to the interests of Great Britain in the Pacific and in Central Asia?

"If so, he could decide right now together with the U.S.A. and Russia to checkmate the 'yellow race'.

*"But between the European and the Eastern Asiatic complex of problems, lies the sharply antagonistically organized special and economic system of Soviet Russia which is instinctively felt by British imperialism to be a fundamentally more decisive opponent and a potentially greater menace to its world Empire than Japan, which, though it may prove to be a competitor, will never, so long as it continues in its present form of organization, prove to be able to upset the very foundations of its world system of domination by shattering the bases of the great capitalist power. One can conclude an alliance and divide the markets with competitors after setting appropriate quotas, but one cannot do anything of the sort with the Red hereditary enemy, Soviet Russia. This is the way the English Conservatives argue.*

"Recently [he adds,] your correspondent had the opportunity of speaking with an outstanding English Conservative, a modern imperialist of the purest water, and former governor of one of England's greatest protectorates. This statesman offered the following solution:

*"We shall give Japan freedom of action against Russia. Japan may extend her Korean-Manchurian border to the Arctic Ocean and annex the Far Eastern part of Siberia. She will then have at her disposal the Lena gold fields which will substantially affect her present forced export policy. We shall allow Germany the right to arm and conclude an alliance with France, thus making impossible German expansion in the West as a result of Franco-British co-operation, but on the other hand, we shall open up to Germany the path to the East, thus making its expansion possible. In this way we will succeed in keeping the attention of Japan and Germany away from England an endangering the position of Russia'.*



"The English public, [continues the correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse*,] however, will not support such a policy because it is too rationalistic, too brutal, too open. *But from the point of view of the interests of the British Empire, this policy is logically faultless. And let us be frank, is it not true that in the last months English foreign policy has been developing in this direction in relation to Germany and Japan?*"

Precisely so, is it not true that in the last month British policy has been guided in this direction in relation to Germany and Japan? Is it not true that the declaration of the "outstanding English Conservative"—who is none other than Lord Lloyd, one of the organizers of the fascist groupings of the so-called "Young Tories"—is an excellent supplement to the debate in the House of Commons? And finally, can there still be any doubt that British imperialism is the instigator of the war against the U.S.S.R.?

\* \* \*

We must take into consideration the concrete situation in which the so-called Anglo-German rapprochement is taking place. The British imperialists understand quite well how great is the strain on the relations between classes and States in contemporary capitalist Europe, and they take into account the fact that a new Franco-German war would be dangerous and even fatal. But if the leading circles of the Conservative Party and the British General Staff understand that a second Sedan is a task which cannot be so easily solved in our times, they, on the other hand, allow themselves to believe in the possibility of a repetition of Jena. But what would the defeat of the Hitler dictatorship lead to? Would it not lead to bringing the proletarian masses into action and . . . at the mere thought of the proletarian revolution in the heart of Europe the British die-hards turn ghastly pale! No! Imperialist Britain has its own variant for the solution of European problems. Precisely because both Germany needs the assistance of England, and France cannot renounce this assistance, British imperialism is in position to bring her influence to bear, in one way or another, on the course of events in the European capitalist continent, and to direct these events for a time. And it is precisely for this reason that it is possible for British imperialism to play the role of the organizer of the war against the Soviet Union. It is not only a case of the anti-Soviet ideology of the ruling classes in Britain. The whole of the international bourgeoisie, of course, is sufficiently hostile to the Soviet Union. It is a question of the actual conditions in which the ruling classes in every country find themselves, of the political situation and finally, of the degree to which this political situation favors the realization of long cherished anti-Soviet plans. It

is on this basis that the concrete line of Britain's foreign policy is being constructed.

British imperialism is rendering not only moral support, but also according, to all appearances, material support to the German fascists. It is supporting them in the sense that it is making it actually possible for German fascism to achieve complete freedom to arm itself, or, more exactly, to secure land armaments which in themselves represent no danger for the British Isles so long as the French army is in being in Europe.

A strong army is the key to the solution of the task which German fascism has set itself, namely the task of an advance eastwards. German fascism is not only creating this army, but has already in practice done so, not without the help of her friends in London. *In addition, Britain is doing all possible to handicap the attempts of French imperialism to stop the actual rearming of Germany and hinder the annulment by fascist Germany of the military clauses in the Versailles Treaty, and thus create the prerequisites for the revision by force of the territorial statutes.* It is true that England is ready to guarantee the integrity of the French boundaries, for London is by no means interested in seeing Germany replace France as the hegemon in Europe. Just exactly how the map of Europe will look after the fascist conquerors have finished with it is for the meantime a question which least of all occupies the British bourgeoisie. The main thing is to make good use of such a "God-given" event as the establishment of the fascist dictatorship, to try again, and, what is more, determinedly to organize an anti-Soviet war. And in the course of this war, which will inevitably demand of Germany to strain its forces to the fullest extent, the possibility will undoubtedly present itself of limiting in one form or another, the appetites for conquest of the reborn Vikings. A firm military alliance with France is necessary precisely in order to be able to call a "halt!" to German imperialism at the right moment. This alliance, however, has still other advantages, in that the British imperialists hope through the instrumentality of this alliance *to curtail France's freedom of action, to isolate her from the forces struggling for peace.* They hope thereby to prevent her from interfering prematurely, and from hindering the destruction of French positions in Central and Eastern Europe *and thereby to isolate the countries against which fascist Germany's expansion is directed.*

The London conversations which took place in May and June between representatives of Great Britain, U.S.A., and Japan have not led to any preliminary agreement whatsoever, not only with regard to the fundamental questions facing the Conference, but also regarding procedure, the exact date for calling the Conference and as to who should



participate in it. Particularly as regards the latter point the question has arisen of inviting to the Conference not only the five States which participated in the Washington and London Naval Agreements, but also the U.S.S.R. and Germany. The political problems linked up with the Far East have, mainly on the insistence of Japan, been removed from the program of the preliminary conversations. Japanese imperialism wishes at all costs to prevent a repetition of the Washington Conference, when alongside the Naval Agreement it was compelled, under the united pressure of the U.S.A. and Great Britain, to make concessions on questions of Far Eastern policy. It wishes to preserve in fact the plunder which it has seized at the expense of China, and to preserve for itself unlimited possibilities for further imperialist expansion. The Japanese proposal to the U.S.A. made at a time of the London conversations regarding a pact of non-aggression is an open maneuver, which by no means implies a lessening of Anglo-American contradictions, but is only calculated to free the hands of Japan for the present period of time in relation to the U.S.S.R. and China. As was to be expected, the proposal was turned down by the U.S.A. Insofar as political questions have been removed from the program of the conversations, the latter for the time being are limited to purely technical military and naval problems. In view of the absence of any kind of political basis, any kind of serious agreement on these questions is completely ruled out.

This is how the British imperialists would like to solve the European problem. They, it is true, understand that this whole scheme does not depend only on their own will. They also foresee a most unfavorable turn of events, namely, the break-up of German fascism. The peoples of Eastern and Central Europe would hardly accept submissively the yoke of German imperialism which is pining for colonial oppression and plunder. Moreover, the fascist bands would have to deal with the Soviet Union

and we know how these bands will end up if they attempt to lay hold of a single inch of Soviet territory. At any rate it cannot be said that the British imperialists are deeply convinced of success in case of such operations. If things go as far as a revision of boundaries, it is by no means essential that the boundary lines be only moved eastward; without a doubt they can be moved far westward as well.

These are problems which are being thought about in London painstakingly and daily. *This is why British imperialism is mustering all its forces to create not only the corresponding fronts in Europe, but also to utilize the situation created in the Far East.* In London they understand quite well how greatly interested Japanese imperialism is in having a military ally in Europe. German fascism is logically such an ally. And it is in this direction, *the direction of the closest rapprochement between German and Japanese fascism, that British diplomacy is steering.* Germany, therefore, is a trump card in the hands of British imperialism, a trump card and at the same time a bait.

Thus we can come to the following conclusions: British imperialism is trying in every way to utilize the political situation in order to unleash anti-Soviet war in Europe and in the Far East. It supports the case of fascist Germany and it openly sympathizes with the aspirations of Japanese imperialism. It renders these countries political and material support, it arms them. At the same time British imperialism tries to shackle the freedom of action of those countries which are threatened by the aggression of the German and Japanese imperialists.

We have therefore in front of us *a completed policy of the unleashing of war; before us are the real instigators of a new world blood-bath against the toiling masses.* Now, more than ever before, it is clear that British imperialism is the main organizer of the war against the Soviet Union, and the preparations for war have entered on such a phase when the organizers themselves do not any longer consider it necessary to hide the parts they are playing.





# ON THE ROAD TO A MASS COMMUNIST PARTY IN AUSTRIA

By V. KNORIN

THE working class movement in Austria has entered a new stage in its development.

The liquidation of the last remnants of parliamentarianism by the Dollfuss Government has dealt a *decisive blow at the democratic and reformist illusions of the working masses*. The artillery bombardment of the fine workers' tenements which were built by the Vienna social-democratic municipality destroyed not only these homes, but also the illusions about *municipal socialism*. The defeat of the Austrian proletariat in the February fights has convinced many who not long ago were active members of the Social-Democratic Party that, although their party was a mass party in the past, *it was not the kind of party that the working class needs*. They have been convinced that it is not enough for the proletariat only to have a mass party, but that what is necessary is that this mass party be a *revolutionary* party and that it possess revolutionary theory, strategy and tactics. The February defeat of the Austrian proletariat has convinced many people that "*Austro-Marxism*" does not exist and never has, that it is only *Austro-reformism* that has been in existence, and that it led to the bankruptcy of social-democracy.

This bankruptcy is not only of an organizational character, but is primarily bankruptcy in policy, theory, strategy and tactics. A deep ideological crisis is now shaking social-democracy from top to bottom. Not a single one of its theoreticians or leaders can make a case out any further for their old line. The entire huge system of its mass organizations has collapsed. The *revolutionary correctness of the Communists* has become clear. A beginning has been made of the passage of masses of social-democratic workers and party functionaries to support for the Communist Party. The most revolutionary groups and those least affected by Austro-reformist "theories" have *already joined* the Communist Party, others are coming close to it, and still others *are trying to save the remnants of the old Social-Democratic Party*, but are revising some of the theoretical and tactical theses of the Austro-reformists, in order to adapt themselves to the moods of the masses.

History has also compelled Otto Bauer to acknowledge a number of elementary truths which the Communist Party propagated in Austria for fifteen years. We will not polemize with Bauer here. We will not

for the moment search for what is and what is not honest at this point. We will only take note of what he says now, even though he does so in a very con-

fused manner.

1. "Our legal mass Party which was created on the basis of democracy was not as yet and could not be a real revolutionary Party.

2. "As long as the means of production remain the private property of the capitalists, so long therefore as none other than the capitalist mode of production exists, a proletarian [social-democratic—Ed.] government is compelled [?] *to defend and develop capitalist production, and thereby serves the interests of the capitalists*, for otherwise the *whole* [underlined by author—Ed.] of production will be destroyed, the workers become unemployed and the State bankrupt. This contradiction between the politically dominant situation [?!] of the proletariat and the economically dominant position of the bourgeoisie *must very soon lead to the overthrow of the political domination* [?!] of the working class by the capitalists. . . ."

3. "The revolution against fascism cannot be a bourgeois revolution, which the proletariat only later attempt to develop into a proletarian revolution, but must from the very outset be a proletarian revolution.

4. "It is impossible to overthrow fascism by legal methods. *It can only be overthrown by violence*. Its inheritor can only be a *revolutionary dictatorship*.

5. "We will not be able to mobilize the working class for the struggle to re-establish bourgeois democracy, but for the struggle to establish a *revolutionary dictatorship* which will destroy capitalism and by expropriating the bourgeoisie and the landowners will create the conditions for the socialist reorganization of society.

6. "The dictatorship of the proletariat is . . . *the means which the proletariat . . . must adopt in order to destroy the division of society into classes*, and thereby to create the prerequisite for socialist democracy as well."\*

In making these statements, Otto Bauer noticeably parted with the Second International whose point of

\* See "Strategy of the Class Struggle" by Otto Bauer, in No. 1 *Der Kampf* for May, 1934, pp. 8, 9, 10, and his article "Democracy and Socialism" in No. 2 *Der Kampf* for June, 1934, pp. 59, 63. Unless otherwise stated, italics are ours.—Ed.



view has been formulated by Fritz Adler.

Fritz Adler states that:

"The task facing our movement always was to break all the illusions held by the proletarian masses, illusions reformist as well as revolutionary, democratic as well as socialist."

And what is this Second International "spirit of the destruction" of all illusions aiming at?

He desires but one thing, namely, to destroy the revolutionary "illusions" of the Austrian proletariat, and on those points where Otto Bauer has come closer to the proletariat, to destroy Otto Bauer as well. He is against the slogan of proletarian revolution in Austria, he is against "illusions" about revolution in general. It is clear that we are faced with a basic difference between the declarations made by Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler.

We do not know what has called forth these declarations by Otto Bauer. Have they been called forth *only* by his desire to save himself from being isolated from the masses, an attempt to "accept everything" in the period when the masses are on the move, including the uprising, the dictatorship of the proletariat and "illegal methods" of struggle, in order later to repudiate it all? For we remember the times when Otto Bauer was ready to write the word "struggle" in capital letters, and pronounce the words "revolutionary dictatorship" with much rolling of the r's.

Or have these declarations on the part of Otto Bauer been called forth by a *certain turn* on his part towards the proletarian revolution? We do not exclude this possibility. But if Otto Bauer takes his declarations seriously, then he should have drawn the logical tactical and organizational conclusions. He should have broken with the Second International in which there are people who according to his own words "serve the bourgeoisie with a view to preserving its class domination", and should establish a *militant united front* in Austria, and in the last analysis *proceed to unification with the Communists*. But the whole point is that Otto Bauer *does not draw these conclusions!* On the contrary. In his article "The New Heinfeld" he proposes the task of uniting all the socialist groups and of breaking away those one-time social-democrats from the Communist Party who have passed into its ranks, *under the old social-democratic leadership*, under the leadership of Bauer and Deutsch and the Second International. But it is just this leadership and its policy that have gone bankrupt. The masses do not want to repeat what has gone past. The Communists are for unity, but for revolutionary unity. The attempt being made by Otto Bauer to rehabilitate social-democracy is an attempt to preserve the split in the Austrian proletariat which has turned to the Communist Interna-

tional. Insofar as Otto Bauer is attempting to rehabilitate the old social-democracy, his "revolutionary theory" remains idle chatter, and the "revolutionary theses" which he advances *do not help the Austrian proletariat to find its way to revolutionary fighting unity* for the struggle against fascism, but keep it back from this only correct path. The line of demarcation between the revolutionaries and reformists is now the question of their relation to the Communist Party and the Communist International. There can be no turn to the revolution without a turn to Communism. The masses no longer believe in "revolutionary" phrases.

*We consider that the present position adopted by Otto Bauer will lead to his isolation from the Austrian proletariat in the same degree as his previous position did.* Victor Adler's "Heinfeld" led to unification, while Otto Bauer's "Heinfeld" is an attempt to continue the split in the Austrian proletariat.

A step much further than that taken by Otto Bauer has already been taken by the *central committee of the "Revolutionary Socialists"* which is working in Austria itself. In a letter dated May 20, 1934, read at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Second International, it writes:

"The fascist dictatorship has destroyed *all the democratic and reformist illusions among us*, the proletarian masses. The workers know now that *fascist violence* can only be broken by *proletarian violence*, only through an uprising of the people. To prepare for this revolution of the people is the task which the Austrian socialists have set themselves. The aim of this revolution can only be the *conquest of State power, the dictatorship of the proletariat*, which will destroy the political basis of capitalist society in order to bring about a classless society, social-democracy.

"We have no doubt that the International will approve these principles, which, in the hell of the fascist dictatorship have become the common property of all proletarian fighters of the countries under fascist dictatorship. But the socialist future will come very much nearer if the International and its parties will the more decisively make these principles the *principles of their own activities*.

"But the Austrian socialists want in the International to be the interpreters of this passionate thirst for *proletarian unity* which has seized the working masses. In the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, socialist workers in no way differ from their class comrades in the Communist organizations. They are subjected to the same kind of persecution and suffering, and if the aims towards which they are striving be the same, then now under the oppression of the fascist dictatorship there are no longer any contradictions between them on the tactics of the struggle.

"We are fully aware of all the difficulties which



from both sides face the path leading to agreement between the Labor and Socialist International and the Communist International. Nevertheless, we demand that everything should be done on the part of the socialists in order to establish unity. Our minimum demand is that the L.S.I. makes a proposal to the Communist International to sign an honest *pact of non-aggression*, at least in the fascist countries. But in addition to this, there should be a continuation of the efforts to remove the hindrances and misunderstandings which have interfered with unity up till now. The aim is worth fighting for with the greatest passion!

"From the fascist hell, from the torture chambers of the dictatorship, we call to the workers of the entire world! May they respond to our call!"

It is well known that the Executive Committee of the Second International not only did not decide to make this appeal of the Austrian socialists the basis of their policy, but that they *did not even seriously discuss* it, only instructing Fritz Adler to write a letter in reply. It is known that after this appeal had been made, a number of socialist parties *turned down* the proposals of the Communists for a united front in the struggle to defend Comrade Thaelmann and the other prisoners of fascism. It is also well known that Swiss social-democracy has just *forbidden* social-democrats to participate in the united front organs for struggle against fascism along with the Communists. We are only surprised at the naivette of the central committee of the "revolutionary socialists", which imagined that the Second International "would do all to establish unity".

As far as the Communist International and its sections are concerned *they are really doing all within their power*, and in spite of the refusals of the social-democratic parties are approaching them again and again with the most insistent proposals for the establishment of the united front of struggle (for example France). We think that quite important disagreements both in principle and in tactics still divide the Communists and the "revolutionary socialists". But if the party of the "revolutionary socialists" really and seriously thinks that in the struggle against fascism "socialist workers in no way differ from their class comrades in the Communist organizations", and that "there are no contradictions between them on the tactics of struggle", then, in our opinion, it is not sufficient to conclude a "pact of non-aggression", but what is needed is to carry on *joint revolutionary action and to create a real united front between the Communists and the present "revolutionary socialists"*. The Austrian Communist Party on its part is doing all that it can in order to achieve just such a real militant united front.

As regards a "pact of non-aggression", that is, a

mutual suspension of criticism, then we have to state that as far back as March 5, 1933, the Communist International recommended to all Communist Parties that they cease attacks on those social-democratic organizations which participate in a joint revolutionary struggle with the Communists on the basis of a concrete program of action, and at the same time to expose as strikebreakers those who break up this united front of struggle. If we examine the pages of the illegal, Austrian *Rote Fahne*, we do not find any uncomradely polemics there directed against the organization of the "revolutionary socialists", in spite of the fact that there is no agreement or "pact of non-aggression" in existence between the Austrian Communists and the "revolutionary socialists". And this is not accidental. The Austrian "revolutionary socialists" are carrying on a revolutionary struggle against fascism in a number of places. The Communists, of course, are bound to point out a number of shortcomings, and to indicate the inconsistency and indecisiveness of the "revolutionary socialists". It would harm the working class if the Communists were to be silent, if they did not point out that the "revolutionary socialists" have not yet broken their connections with the opportunists and reformists, which fact represents a tremendous danger for the Austrian working class movement.

But even the present, embryonic rapprochement between the "revolutionary socialists" and the Communists has already called forth friction between the "revolutionary socialists" and the foreign committee of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party abroad. Otto Bauer is polemizing against the "revolutionary socialists" quite sharply on questions of theory and tactics. But, as Fritz Adler's letter shows, the Second International comes out still more decisively against the line of principle and tactics of the "revolutionary socialists". And we consider this quite natural, because the Second International is an organization of reformists and not of revolutionaries. As an organization of reformists it carries and will continue to carry on a struggle against proletarian revolutionaries. On the other hand, we also consider it natural and useful that the conference of "revolutionary socialists" discussed the question of a break with the foreign committee (Brun) of the Austrian social-democracy. At the same time we consider that the "revolutionary socialists" were inconsistent in raising the question of their relations with the Second International. We consider that the "revolutionary socialists" in Austria will not be able to refrain from criticizing Bauer and Deutsch and the entire Second International, if they maintain their position of *joint struggle with the Communists, while Otto Bauer and Co. do not adopt this position of the real revolutionary struggle of the proletariat*. Still less have the Communists now grounds for refraining from



criticizing Otto Bauer, not to speak of criticizing the Second International, and particularly the line of Adler. Still less have we now grounds for refraining from criticizing Swiss social-democracy, which turned down the proposal of the Communist Party of Switzerland to form a united front for the struggle to free Thaelmann and the other prisoners in fascist jails, and which has adopted the position of defending the bourgeois fatherland, and which has adopted the tactics of non-resistance to fascist demonstrations. Still less have we any grounds for refraining from criticizing the Czech social-democrats who, as members of the government, carry through the banning of the Communist Party and the cutting of the wages of workers and employees. Still less grounds have we for not criticizing the Danish, Swedish and other social-democratic parties which, to use the words of Otto Bauer himself, are preserving the capitalist mode of production and serve the interests of the capitalists. In the case of those organizations which cease to be guardians of the interests of the capitalists and who pass over to the class struggle, the Communists consider it possible not only to establish a united front from time to time, but to permanently cooperate with them on the basis of the revolutionary class struggle.

Especially during the period following the February armed struggles has the Austrian Communist Party shown that it stands for the real unity of the working class. Thousands of Austrian workers, social-democrats, have understood that there is no other way than by strengthening the Communist Party, by transforming it into a revolutionary mass party, into the only party leading the struggles of the Austrian proletariat for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and for the victory of Socialism. If the "revolutionary socialists" in Austria wish to follow the line of closer cooperation with the Austrian Communists, then they will be met most cordially by the Austrian Communist Party, two-thirds of the membership of which already consists of comrades who prior to the February battles were in the ranks of social-democracy. They will only meet with condemnations from the Second International, as Fritz Adler's letter shows. But now the Austrian Communists, and particularly those who five months ago were still in the same party as the present "revolutionary socialists", are in duty bound to point out to these "revolutionaries" who are still in the ranks of the social-democracy, their inconsistency and indecisiveness.

If a successful struggle is to be waged for the victory of the proletarian revolution, for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, what is necessary is that a *united, single and strictly central-*

*ized and disciplined mass Communist Party be established which is boundlessly devoted to the struggle against fascism.* The Paris Commune perished because its leadership did not belong to one party. The Austrian February battles suffered defeat because they were led by *an opportunist non-revolutionary party.* The Russian October revolution was *victorious* because it was led by *a single strictly centralized and disciplined revolutionary Party of Bolsheviks* which had rallied around itself the entire revolutionary proletariat, and had *isolated social-democracy from the masses.* For a period of fifteen years the Austrian Communist Party defended and propagated the principles of Communism, the proletarian revolution and the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. History has proven that the Communist Party of Austria and not Austrian social-democracy was correct. The theory and tactics of the Austrian Communists, headed by the worker-shoemaker Koplenig have proved to be *correct*, while the theory and tactics of Austrian social-democracy led by the doctors of science *Bauer, Adler, Renner*, etc. have proved to be *incorrect*. It is useless for Fritz Adler to want to defend the old reformist, socialist program and tactics for "democratic countries". He thereby only prepares the defeat of the proletariat in these countries. History has proven that there is only one way to achieve the unification of the Austrian proletariat and to bring about a revolutionary struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and that is, unification around the Communist Party, under the leadership of the Communist International.

The Austrian Communists and the entire Communist International understand quite well that many social-democratic workers, and in particular the "revolutionary socialists" who are disappointed with the old social-democracy, have not as yet outlived their prejudices against the Communist International. They consider that the final unification of all the revolutionary elements in Austria is not a question of a single day. They demand one thing, first and foremost, of all "revolutionary socialists", namely, *revolutionary class struggle together with the Communists, and determined struggle against the fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and for the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

The February battles have so shaken the basis of social-democracy that it is possible that entire groups and organizations of previous supporters of the Second International will pass over to the side of the revolutionary class struggle and become united with the Communists. Under the present circumstances not only the rank and file members of the Social-Democratic Party, but also a whole number of most important functionaries of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party have moved away from reformism and come closer to the position of the Communist Party



to such a degree that their passage to the side of the Communist Party has become a possibility and a reality. The Communists know of different forms of cooperation with revolutionary workers, who have not as yet finally broken away from social-democracy—from separate agreements to jointly carry out some definite campaign, to sympathetic affiliation to the Communist International. But the Communists are trying with all their power to ensure that out of this more or less accidental cooperation in Austria, there should arise organizational and political unification, namely one *united* Communist Party. There are not and there cannot be any hindrances to direct negotiations in Austria or outside it, between the Communists and any social-democratic organization or party as a whole regarding unity of action, unity of program and tactics in struggle and in the last analysis regarding organizational unification on the basis of Communism.

If the "revolutionary socialists" are *really serious* in thinking that there are no longer any programmatic or tactical differences between them and the Communists, then the path leading to rapprochement and unification is the only correct path. If they *wish* to go along this path then this will lead to the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship in Austria being speeded up. But if they *do not want* to go along this path, and listen to the shouts of the Second International and stop half-way, then they will become a hindrance to the development of the revolutionary struggle against fascism, and will isolate themselves within a short time from the wide mass movement of the proletariat.

In order to overthrow the fascist dictatorship it is necessary to unite the widest masses of the proletariat and of the peasants and petty bourgeoisie under the revolutionary leadership of a united, centralized Communist Party.

At the present time an enormous responsibility is placed upon the Austrian Communists for the fate of the Austrian proletariat. The Communist Party of Austria is the inheritor of all that was really revolutionary in the Austrian working class movement from the very beginning of its existence. The Communists are the only inheritors of the best traditions of the working class mass organizations which social-democracy directed along the false path of class collaboration and which are now broken up by the fascists. The main slogan which the Austrian Communists have given the masses is as follows: "Do not let the fascist dictatorship destroy a single proletarian organization, but continue their work illegally."

*"Not a single one of the mass organizations of the working class which have existed hitherto must be broken up or dissolved. We are directing our activity to the end that the workers should remain solid, and that their organizations should continue*

*to exist illegally under the current revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party. Only if we succeed in rallying these mass organizations around our Party, will it become possible to carry on new struggles under firm revolutionary leadership. Without revolutionary leadership—the proletariat will be destroyed."* (Vienna, *Rote Fahne*, June, 1934.)

The free trade unions were in their time created as organizations of class struggle. The social-democratic leadership ate away their revolutionary essence. The social-democratic leadership thereby weakened the trade unions and lessened their significance. But the many years' history of the organized working class movement has left a deep impression on the consciousness of the working masses. The workers consider the trade unions as their organizations. That is why it is so difficult for fascism to liquidate the free trade unions. Social-democracy considers that the existence of the trade unions has come to an end by the fact that the trade unions have been banned by the fascist dictatorship and that the right to conclude collective agreements has been abolished. Social-democracy considers that the "independent self-governing trade unions, which defend the economic and social interests of the workers and employees generally can be reestablished only after the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship". (See *Arbeiterzeitung*, March 11.) They propose that the fascist trade union organizations be boycotted, but do not indicate any other way of organizing those who were members of the free trade unions. Taking into account the deep-rooted connections of the working masses with their trade unions over many tens of years, taking into account that the reformist leaders either fled from or went to the fascists, and that only a few of them remained with the masses, the Austrian Communists call upon all the revolutionary workers to undertake the task of re-establishing the free trade unions, banned by the fascists, as organs of revolutionary class struggle. Moreover, the Communists are ready to cooperate with all individual persons and organizations striving to re-establish the trade unions as organs of class struggle. The important successes achieved by the Communist Party of Austria in this field show that the tactics of the Austrian Communist Party correspond to the interests of the broad masses of workers.

The Schutzbund organization was created by the Austrian Social-Democratic Party as a militant organization for the defense of the bourgeois "democratic" republic, while the Austrian workers regarded the Schutzbund as their militant organization, their armed forces. The social-democratic leaders weakened the Schutzbund by their policy and led it to defeat in the February armed battles. During the February battles a number of the leaders of the



Schutzbund went over to the side of the fascists, while others of them fled. But the main mass of the Schutzbunders and their officers fought against the fascists. In spite of the defeat of the Schutzbunders, the fascists did not succeed in destroying their organizations. The Schutzbund has remained an organization, to organize a new struggle against the fascist dictatorship. But in their study of the causes of the February defeat, they have more and more had to recognize that this defeat is the result of the social-democratic policy, and of its leadership. This has led to an important section of the Schutzbunders coming over to the side of Communism. The Austrian Communist Party is assisting by all means in preserving and restoring the Schutzbund organizations, and in transforming them from a democratic republican into a revolutionary army of the proletariat for the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The tactics of the Austrian Communist Party in the free trade unions and in the Schutzbund show that it has taken upon itself the task of preserving all that is of worth, all that was created by the Austrian working class movement over a period of tens of years, carrying on a struggle against what was reformist in these organizations. It has taken upon itself the task of creating a real mass basis for the proletarian revolution.

Social-democracy betrayed the Austrian working class. It betrayed its mass organizations. The workers have convinced themselves that the Social-Democratic Party is not the party which the working class needs. They have also convinced themselves that the trade unions and the Schutzbund organizations, as led by social-democracy, cannot defend their class interests. Therefore, the whole of the social-democratic system of working class organizations has fallen to pieces. The cadres of the Social-Democratic Party which have remained in the country have, under the pressure of the masses, been compelled to make a turn to new methods of work. Taking into account that the very name of social-democracy has become unpopular among the masses, and ashamed to call themselves the Social-Democratic Party, they have renamed themselves the Party of "Revolutionary Socialists". The foreign committee of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party is in existence abroad, but there is no Social-Democratic Party in Austria itself. But the "Revolutionary Socialists" Party has not yet finally broken with the foreign committee of the Social-Democratic Party, and still belongs to the Second International, and wishes to be the inheritor of the "riches" left by Bauer and Deutsch. It has to convince itself that it is impossible to sit between two stools. A choice must be made; either a break must be made with the Second International, with the foreign committee, and a move made to the Left,

to Communism, or else it must go with the foreign committee and maintain the line of Austro-reformism.

The foreign committee which sees the masses leading it, is at a loss, but wishes to show how "revolutionary" it is in words, but not in deeds. It has agreed to "revolutionize" its ideological line, but it does not wish to take the path of the proletarian class struggle. It has lost its sense of direction. In its confusion it is taking a path where only isolation from the masses awaits it.

In their confusion the representatives of the foreign committee can find nothing better than to popularize a kind of boycott in Austria, similar to "Gandhism". In the *Arbeiterzeitung* of June 10, they publish the following call to the masses:

"Boycott municipal enterprises!"

"Don't put your savings in the Vienna Central Savings Bank!"

"Don't patronize the municipal baths!"

"Don't drink municipally brewed beer!"

"Fascism proposes that you economize. Economize in your expenditure on water, gas, electric light, and in the use of the tramways!"

"Don't smoke!"

When these methods of struggle give rise to laughter among the masses of the workers, the social-democrats turn to support of individual terror and though shamefacedly, they even resort to joint action with the Hitlerites.

"After the bloody punishment of the Austrian workers in February, the hatred of the masses of the workers towards the Dollfuss system has become so great that on occasion even social-democratic workers who are hostile to the Nazis undertake joint action with the latter against the Dollfuss dictatorship." (*Social-Democrat*, June 12, 1934.)

These "tactics" of the leaders who have lost their heads cannot win them the workers. It is just because of the fact that social-democracy has lost its head that the masses are quickly losing their last illusions with regard to social-democracy, and that their will to unity with the Communists is growing. While social-democracy is casting itself from one adventure to another, and in the last analysis is building all its prospects on disagreements in the camp of the bourgeoisie, and on clashes between the imperialist interests in Austria, the Communist Party is carrying on a struggle to win over the majority of the working class.

The Communists belong to that Party which is basing itself on the forces of the Austrian working class itself, and is gathering these forces for the revolutionary class struggle, the Party which is carrying on the struggle to win the majority of the work-



ing class, and is preparing the last decisive struggle against the Austrian bourgeoisie *through the general political strike and armed uprising.*

All the revolutionary workers in Austria, members of the social-democratic organizations, trade unions, *Schutzbund*, and other mass organizations, must sup-

port the revolutionary proletarian tactics of the Austrian Communist Party. It alone can lead the Austrian proletariat to victory over fascism, to the victory of the Austrian revolution, to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to the establishment of a Socialist Soviet Austria.

## THE RISE AND FALL OF AUSTRO-MARXISM

By ERNST FISHER

(Ex-editor of the Vienna Social-Democratic *ARBEITERZEITUNG*, who has recently joined the Communist Party.)

**"VICTORY, victory, victory!"** crowed the Vienna *Arbeiterzeitung* on April 25, 1927. "See what a party the Social-Democratic Party is in Austria and in Vienna! An invincible party of steel, whose firmness and determination fills every social-democrat with a feeling of triumphant joy, a party to which everyone, even its fiercest opponent, must give its due!" On the previous day the Austrian electors had cast their votes in the ballot box, and social-democracy obtained 1,500,000 votes compared with 1,300,000 in 1925, while the united bourgeois parties had now only 150,000 majority. In Vienna, social-democracy had obtained about 700,000 votes, and all the bourgeois parties together had got a little over 400,000. But Austrian social-democracy was able to boast not only of electoral successes. It had at its disposal much more important means of power than a million and a half votes. In Vienna alone there were 350,000 members of the social-democratic organization, while the social-democratic trade unions numbered 750,000 workers and employees. The factories, railways, the post and telegraph institutions were in the hands of social-democracy. In the barracks social-democracy had the support of thousands of soldiers, while thousands of proletarians received military training in the republican *Schutzbund*, and all the institutions of the City Council of Vienna were absolutely under the control of the Social-Democratic Party leadership. Finally, the masses had confidence in the Social-Democratic Party, and were prepared blindly to carry out all its instructions. With a feeling of pride and self-consciousness, the Austrian proletariat marched behind its Social-Democratic Party and this pride and self-consciousness increased in proportion to the growth of its extraordinary electoral successes, turning into the conviction that the working class was approaching directly to the seizure of power.

Otto Bauer, the leader of Austrian social-democracy, wrote in the *Arbeiterzeitung*:

"The former government system—the Pan-German Christian Social System—has been overthrown. The Seipel Government will have to go. Thus the proportion of our electors increases with each new election. Thus we are gradually becoming the majority, and consequently are moving towards power."

A few days later Otto Bauer declared at a mass meeting that:

"One or two more electoral victories like this, and the bourgeois government will be finished with. What is the real meaning of these elections for us? We have made the city council of Vienna impregnable, while in Parliament we have moved the line of our trenches far ahead. Our enemies still occupy the fortress. This fortress will not fall today or tomorrow, but we know that it will fall. All of us, and not remote generations, will live to see its fall."

This is how the fanfares of victory sounded—at first in transports of joy but later on more cautiously. For that matter, some of the social-democratic statesmen shook their heads and murmured uneasily: "We have become too powerful. What shall we do with our power? We must be more unassuming, and adapt ourselves to the other parties of the International." And they prayed that God would help the bourgeois parties to form a decent government.

God heard the prayers of these politicians. Seipel, the head of the old government, was not disturbed by the warnings of the *Arbeiterzeitung*. It never entered his head to resign. He drew the *Landbund*, a peasants' party which had so far played at opposition, into the government coalition, and thus strengthened the united front of the bourgeoisie. Hundreds of thousands of toilers waited expectantly:

"Well," they thought, "everything will change now that we have won!" Within a few weeks hundreds of thousands of toilers had to admit that



nothing had changed, and were forced to ask themselves in astonishment: "Have we really won?" The parliamentary fraction of social-democracy had increased by several new members, but in the police stations workers were beaten up, in the barracks soldiers were treated with contempt, revolutionary workers were discharged from the factories, the judges sentenced the people trusted by the working class to heavy terms of imprisonment while they acquitted the supporters of counter revolution. It was still possible, just as formerly, to exploit, oppress, and shoot down social-democrats without fear of punishment. What had changed in Austria? Nothing had changed.

*The working class raised the question of power.* But social-democracy wished at all costs to evade this question being raised. They faced the workers with the calculations that only 43 per cent of the electors and not 51 per cent had voted for the social-democrats, and that the relationship of forces in parliament was only 9 to 10 and not 10.1 to 9.9. But the workers were not skilled in mathematical subtleties and when three assassins of workers were acquitted on June 14, 1927, the working class on July 15 marched to the Ringstrasse to chase the government out.

#### IS THIS THE RIGHT LANGUAGE?

On the night of July 15 the trusted representatives of the workers in the city electric power station came to the editorial office of the *Arbeiterzeitung*. Otto Bauer did not want to enter into any conversations with them and quickly left the offices. They were received by Friedrich Austerlitz, the editor of the *Arbeiterzeitung*. There was no other member of the C.C. of the Social-Democratic Party in the party buildings. The workers' trusted representatives demanded that the clear slogan be issued of "The general strike! Masses! March to the Ringstrasse!" Austerlitz wavered. He felt the necessity for a mass uprising, but he was a fanatical believer in abstract legal concepts and argued that: "We cannot demonstrate against the verdict of a jury!" "We don't care," replied the workers' representatives. "We will demonstrate against everything, against the whole system. We've got to drive the government out and seize power!" Such was the logic of the working class. But it was impossible to make the leaders feel this logic. Austerlitz showed the workers' trusted representatives a leading article which he had written which included the following:

"The bankruptcy of justice is the worst injury which can be done to working men, and if they feel this bankruptcy some fine day, if their consciousness registers this overwhelming fact, then the end of legal order will have come. The bourgeois world always warns us against civil

war. But does not this challenging and provocative acquittal of those who have murdered workers itself represent *civil war*?"

The workers' representatives listened attentively. "Is this the right language?" asked Austerlitz. "Yes, it is the right language. But we want something more. *We want the right slogans!*" The *Arbeiterzeitung* came out with a passionate leading article *but without any slogans*.

This is how the events of July 15, 1927 began. On this day Austro-Marxism came into conflict with reality. On this day the electoral victory won on April 24 was put to the test and the forces of the working class, no longer concealed by the ballot box but appearing in their naked reality, stood face to face with the forces of counter revolution. "Is this the right language?" was the question asked by one of the most brilliant journalists of Austrian social-democracy a few hours previously. "Here is the right language!" was the reply of the workers when they set to building barricades, storming police stations, and setting fire to the law courts. "Here is the right language!" was the reply of the counter revolution as the first volleys fired by the police rang out. The workers fought with paving stones and sticks against swords and rifles. Panting for breath, covered with blood, burning with rage and fighting determination, they came to the parliament building where the social-democratic leaders had gathered. "Give us arms!" was their demand. The social-democratic leaders gave them no arms. The barracks sent delegates: "Have we to come to your help?" The social-democratic leaders refused the help of the soldiers. The Schutzbund troopers waited for orders. The social-democratic leaders issued no orders to them. The mass uprising of the unarmed proletariat was crushed by police terror. At three o'clock in the afternoon the Seipel government was expecting its doom. At seven o'clock in the evening it was surprised to hear of its own victory.

#### AN ACT DICTATED BY A REPUBLICAN SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

At night the social-democrats declared a one-day general strike "in protest", without putting forward any political demands. They declared a railway strike for an indefinite time, without putting forward any political demands. They issued an appeal to the Schutzbund, and to the working class in which they declared:

"In all the districts in Vienna, the Schutzbund are on duty. In order to strengthen the Schutzbund, people able to perform Schutzbund duties must put themselves at its disposal.

"All the other comrades, men and women, who



are not in the Schutzbund, must not go into Ringstrasse during the protest strike or hold demonstrations in the working class areas."

The general strike was a unanimous affair. But the Schutzbund were kept "prepared for action" in their headquarters. The revolutionary strength of the masses was broken. On July 17 the mayor of Vienna issued a proclamation in which he stated that patrols of municipal guards would be stationed throughout the city. "By joint efforts with the union police", stated the proclamation, "we shall ensure law and order." The government proclamation declared that:

"The political clashes which will inevitably accompany the events of the last few days must be carried to the place they belong, *i.e.*, to parliament. At the present time negotiations are taking place between the government and the political parties as to the date when the National Council will be called. The government insists that there must be full freedom for the National Council to meet. For this purpose the transport strike must be finished in its entirety before the National Council is called together."

The transport strike "in its entirety" ended July 18. On July 19, Otto Bauer wrote in the *Arbeiterzeitung*:

"These gentlemen comfort themselves. In these terrible days they have again received proof of the power which has its roots in the discipline of the many thousands of workers, in their belief in their trade unions and their party and they comfort themselves with the idea that the general strike was discontinued *unconditionally!* *Unconditionally!* Is this not capitulation? We will tell you, good gentlemen, how matters stand. Capitulate? Why had we to capitulate? The strike was not broken and could not have been. No, we did not capitulate. But we ended the strike without any arrangement with the government, at our own desire and at our own decision, because we are guided by something which does not exist for the vampires who wanted to filch some advantage for their political parties out of the blood bath on Friday—a feeling of responsibility for the fate of the working class, for the fate of the republic, for the fate of the country. . . . The calling off of the transport strike was an act dictated by a republican sense of responsibility."

The calling off of the transport strike was a new victory for the counter revolution. The social-democratic politicians from Graz and Linz, Salzburg and Innsbruck, people close to Karl Renner, demanded that the transport strike be called off unconditionally. In Vienna they said that the transport strike could not hold out against the Heimwehr; the leaders of Austrian social-democracy

threatened to stop the transport strike at their own risk and at their own risk to come to terms with Rintelen, the commander of the Region and a member of the Christian Social Party, if the C.C. in Vienna were to resist. The C.C. in Vienna offered no resistance. The fantasies of the provincial deputies who magnified a few handfuls of drunken Heimwehr soldiers into big military units, plus a "republican feeling of responsibility" impelled the social-democratic leaders to capitulate to the government. This capitulation converted the Heimwehr, which had had no significance whatever before that time, into a political factor of the greatest importance. This capitulation encouraged the bourgeoisie, who hitherto had trembled at the general strike, at the armed insurrection, to undertake a relentless offensive. This capitulation paralyzed the revolutionary energy of the working class, shook the faith of the workers in their own strength and called forth the gradual disintegration of Austrian social-democracy.

#### REVOLUTION IN THE LABORATORY

In the course of these few weeks—from the exultant shouts of victory on April 25 to the capitulation on July 18—the whole essence of Austro-Marxism was laid bare and its fate was decided. Its surface lustre and its internal insolvency, its ability to attract the masses and its inability to lead them to victory, the strength of its propaganda and the weakness of its actions—all these became clear. Austro-Marxism resembles the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism to the same degree as the homunculus, the man in the glass test tube, resembles a living being. In the laboratory, sheltered from the world, the homunculus flourishes, but woe to him if he should get out of the laboratory into the world of real life. Blinded by the light of day, terrified at a puff of fresh air, he goes under like grass under the scythe. Every part of him is cunningly contrived, but there is only one thing lacking,—namely, the real life force, which cannot be replaced by any cunning tricks of magic. Austro-Marxism was able to organize electoral fights, to stage peaceful demonstrations, full of color and brilliance, to implant among the masses the prescience of a more beautiful and richer future, but when faced with the rifle fire of July 15, 1927, when faced with the howitzers which were brought out on February 12, 1934, it failed to rise to the occasion. In every decisive situation, the revolutionary homunculus lost its head and left its reformist teachers to act as they pleased.

"WE ARE SO POOR AND SO FEW!"

In what conditions was Austro-Marxism able to develop? In the conditions of the political laboratory, in the unique conditions of that absurd State



formation known as Austria. Otto Bauer, the most prominent theoretician of Austro-Marxism, had his own grounds for repeating over and over again and with the greatest insistence that Austria was too small and too weak, in too great a position of dependence to interfere in "high politics". In little Austria, according to him, no decisions could be taken. Retreat had to be undertaken before final conclusions were made and the dissatisfaction of the big neighboring States must not be called forth. Only in this little fragment of the big Hapsburg monarchy could reformism allow itself to make such revolutionary gestures as Austro-Marxism did. Only the social-democracy of this little State was relieved of the necessity of adopting a definite position on foreign policy. Only Austrian social-democracy could allow itself the luxury of not recognizing the League of Nations, the new organization of European imperialism, but when need arose, to appeal to it; for neither the one thing nor the other were to any extent reflected in European politics. German and French social-democracy were compelled to act with their vizors open. Their position on questions of European imperialism had definite results in foreign politics. The position taken up by Austrian social-democracy did not bind it to anything and did not entail any *visible concessions*. The *national question* in Austria played a secondary role. The idea of the Anschluss advocated by Otto Bauer was never popular. For the masses of the petty bourgeoisie, anyone was good if he handed over the means of life and loans. It was almost a matter of no importance to the vast majority of the people in Austria whether one or another party sought support in Germany or France, Italy or the Little Entente. During the Hapsburg monarchy, the national feelings of the *oppressed nations* had developed with great strength, but the national sentiments of the German *ruling nation* developed only in a few provincial towns. Thus, Austro-Marxism found it possible to replace the patriotism of the other reformist parties by a harmless local patriotism, to proclaim the Anschluss and conspire with France and the Little Entente. It could advocate revolution on an international scale but at the same time could repudiate the Austrian revolution, using something like the following arguments: "In principle we are revolutionaries, but little Austria cannot go ahead of the others. The big States would starve us out. They would organize intervention and not allow us to carry on an independent policy." The more energetically the Austro-Marxian leaders stressed the insignificant and pitiful role of Austria, the easier it was for them to wriggle away from the necessity of drawing practical conclusions from their revolutionary phrases.

## THE PRODUCT OF A WRECK

But what was of more importance for Austro-Marxism than the unquestioned fact that Austria is not a big State, but a small one, was the rise of the Austrian Republic. More important than geography were the historical conditions of this wonderful ideology.

The rotten monarchy, which was without vitality, collapsed after its military defeat. The army fell to pieces, into its national component parts. The national revolution of the Slavs developed tempestuously. From the very first days it was more conscious and more purposeful than the proletarian revolution which began spontaneously against the oppressors and exploiters. The bourgeoisie waited with alarm for the disorderly retreat of the defeated army which nothing could restrain any longer, for the old apparatus of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy which had formerly restrained it had ceased to exist as if at the waving of a magic wand. But at the same time the ruling class lost its old instrument of violence, and waited for events without resistance. Social-Democracy was able to take power without a struggle. The soldiers of the popular militia, formed out of the remnants of the old army obeyed only the social-democrats. The weapons belonged to the social-democrats. The State belonged to the social-democrats.

Victor Adler's party did not win power. Events placed power into its hands. The social-democratic leaders hardly took any part in these events. They did not overthrow the government; they approved its overthrow after the event had taken place. The man who was the first to proclaim the republic was not a Viennese social-democrat but a member of the Christian Social Party, Professor Anton Rintelen, who later became chief of the Styria region. But defeat at the front set loose the class forces of the proletariat. In January, 1917, already the proletariat started a mighty strike, but the social-democratic leaders strangled it. The workers rose once again. The toiling masses who returned from the front were not satisfied with the mere fall of the Hapsburgs, but demanded a Soviet republic. They elected Soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies and wanted to convert the collapse of the bourgeoisie into a proletarian revolution. The springs of the proletarian revolution foamed and eddied like mountain torrents at the melting of the snows. They needed to be united into one mighty stream and the *spontaneous movement needed an aim and direction*. But social-democracy did not want anything but a democratic republic. It feared the intervention of the Entente imperialists. It did not believe in the creative force of the working class which had set up a proletarian State in Russia, Hungary, and

Bavaria. It held to the schedule according to which first the bourgeois revolution takes place, and then some time in the distant future, the proletarian revolution will come. It looked on world history as a sedate educational institution. According to all the rules it was necessary to advance from class to class; it was not possible to jump from the first class into the third, to pass from the bourgeois revolution into the proletarian revolution.

#### THE SYSTEM OF PERSUASION

Austrian social-democracy was able to use more refined and gentle methods than Noske and Scheidemann. The favorable and unexampled conditions for the proletarian revolution in Austria were at the same time utilized by Austrian social-democracy to hinder the workers from drawing consistent revolutionary conclusions from the revolutionary situation. "Whatever do you want now?" said the social-democratic leaders to the workers. "The bourgeoisie are helpless. We do not need a dictatorship to cast off the helpless bourgeoisie. But we must not provoke foreign countries. We depend on them for food. We must be cautious so as not to bring about chaos. But within the bounds of what is possible we stand for all that you demand. Soviets of workers' deputies, soldiers' deputies, commissions for socialization—all this can be carried out in a democratic republic without subjecting it to danger. All this is not so bad and is not the most important thing. For power is in our hands, and this is the main thing. But the bourgeoisie, you see, must share responsibility with us. This will make the work easier for us all."

At a later date Otto Bauer called this method the "system of persuasion" and stated with a smile that this system of persuasion had got ahead of the Soviet system. This poor witticism admirably characterizes his treacherous policy.

The proletarian revolution did not develop further. It stopped at the point where social-democracy took power peacefully.

This unexampled event, which has happened but *once*, which consisted in the fact that the working class did not have to seize power but merely to take it, for there was no one else to take it, had a decisive influence on the conception of Austro-Marxism. The dream of a bloodless, painless, peaceful revolution can be felt in all the cunning calculations of Austro-Marxism, together with a nebulous hope that the events of 1918 would repeat themselves in some form or other, namely the transfer of power with all the attributes of revolution without armed insurrection, without the blood and terror of the consistent class struggle.

#### "THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS"

To all this was added something further, for,

thanks to its special circumstances, Austrian social-democracy succeeded in hindering the formation of a mass Communist Party and in ensuring the "unity of the working class". The exceptional situation of the Hapsburg monarchy in 1914 relieved Austrian social-democracy of the necessity of voting for war credits and advertising their social-patriotism, as the German and French social-democrats had been forced to do. The opposition of Friedrich Adler, his attack on the prime minister Sturk, his speech of accusation made before the court attached the revolutionary workers to him. For the Austrian proletariat, Friedrich Adler meant what Karl Liebknecht meant for the German workers. They looked on him as their leader. It is worthy of note that the newly formed Communist Party of Austria in a touchingly naive letter implored Friedrich Adler to stand at its head. The fact that Friedrich Adler did not desert the party of his father, and came to terms with Renner and Co., gave a great moral advantage to Austrian social-democracy and enormously helped to develop the idea of "unity" and "solidarity". This idea of unity and solidarity became one of the basic principles of Austro-Marxism. It had to be proved that in Austria the revolutionary workers and the reformist "burghers", the supporters of Communism and the supporters of democracy, could stand together in a single party and be organizationally solid. The indistinct character of the Austrian revolution was reflected in the indistinct character of the party which wanted to mingle reformism and revolutionary Marxism, and to recommend this laboratory product to everyone as an example worthy of imitation.

#### RED VIENNA

Unless we are aware of the conditions in which Austro-Marxism developed, we cannot understand its influence on the Austrian proletariat. Owing to the breakdown of the Hapsburg monarchy, Austrian social-democracy had greater power than any other social-democracy in Europe as a result of the revolution which it had averted. In all the other countries which had left the Hapsburg empire, these favorable features did not exist. The blossoming out of the national bourgeoisie, who had hitherto been politically downtrodden, the national contradictions, the weakness of the proletariat, all gave a completely different character to the situation in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland and even Hungary. The situation in Austria was the only one of its kind and was incomparable with any other. Austrian social-democracy immediately shared power with the bourgeoisie. But owing to the concrete relationship of forces, above all in view of the character of the national army, which obeyed only the instructions of social-democracy, the latter played a



dominating role in this coalition for a long period. Of course, such a situation could not last long. Capitalism, which remained untouched owing to the policy of social-democracy, was able gradually to fortify itself. Saved by the policy of social-democracy, the bourgeoisie were able gradually to restore their apparatus of violence. The old public prosecutors and the old courts, the old police officers and the bureaucrats were at their disposal. Social-democracy did not socialize the means of production, did not throw overboard the remnants of the State apparatus which had fallen to pieces. And this meant *protecting bourgeois class domination in the democratic republic*. It was by relying on the support of the peasants, who had returned from the front greatly radicalized, but who did not find sympathy among the social-democrats, by relying for support on the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, that the big banks, big industry and big landed proprietors ran the government. The struggle for leadership inevitably ended in the victory of those who mercilessly declaimed in favor of capitalism. But, squeezed out of the government, and having to a considerable extent lost its influence on the government, social-democracy strengthened one of its most important positions, namely, *the municipal government of the capital, Vienna*. This city with its population of millions in a little Alpine country had a much greater relative importance than a similar city populated by millions in any other country of European capitalism. The fact that they consolidated this position, and controlled this apparatus, ensured social-democracy a share in the government power for the future. It made it possible to hide the cracks in Austro-Marxism for the future. Within the limits of the possibilities provided by the capitalist State, the achievements of social-democracy in the municipality of Vienna were unusual. These achievements of energetic and consistent reformism infused ever new illusions among the masses regarding the essence of Austro-Marxism. Between the reality of the capitalist dictatorship and the illusions of the Austrian social-democrats, stood the beautiful edifices of municipal houses, concealing from the gaze of the workers the distant points of historic necessity.

#### THE PATH OF CAPITULATION

On July 15, 1927, it first became clear to the Austrian proletariat how deep was the inner contradictory character of Austro-Marxism. But the masses of social-democratic workers did not want to reconcile themselves to the ruin of their ideology. Their unquestioned faith in Otto Bauer, who personified this ideology, was, it is true, shaken, but they none the less remained social-democrats. They remained social-democrats in the name of "unity" which had

more and more become the only slogan left in the arsenal of Austro-Marxism. On July 17 Otto Bauer must have felt that his theory would not bear to come into conflict with reality. He wanted to retreat. In the intimate circle of his supporters there was talk of founding an independent socialist journal, of drawing Renner into the political editorship of the *Arbeiterzeitung*. Matters did not go as far as this. The congress which was called after July 15 ended by recognizing the "unity of the working class within the framework of social-democracy". And just as the *Arbeiterzeitung* had raised the shout "victory, victory, victory" after the electoral triumph, so it now shouted "unity, unity, unity!" For some time Otto Bauer kept in the background, while Renner and Danenberg were the leading politicians. But the policy of social-democracy was laid down in advance. As *all* the party leaders repudiated revolution, as all the party leaders feared the seizure of power, only one path remained, namely, *the path of capitulation*. For a moment delicate shades or cunning chess moves might seem important to those participating in them but they could not hold back historic development. After its terrible defeat, Austrian social-democracy began to maneuver more wisely, flexibly and successfully than the other social-democratic parties. It utilized the dissension in the camp of counter revolution, and, with psychological cunning, set Schaubert against Seipel, one group against another. With diplomatic elasticity it entered into the underground struggle of the imperialist States, and entered into alliance with the Czechs, Yugoslavs and French against the Heimwehr, but all this did not handicap fascism, but on the contrary, cleared the path for it. Fascism cannot be defeated by intrigues in foreign policy, by parliamentary trickery or by diplomatic smartness. It can only be defeated by the revolutionary class power of the proletariat.

#### DISBELIEF IN THE PROLETARIAT

But Austrian social-democracy had as little belief in the revolutionary class power of the proletariat, in its creative force, as all the other leaders of the Second International. And this lack of faith in the ability of the working class during revolution, and to outgrow itself under the leadership of a revolutionary party, and to meet its gigantic tasks by awakening its enormous reserves of slumbering energy, this petty-bourgeois lack of faith is the root of Austro-Marxism.

The environment which nourished it consisted of prosperous democracy, bursting with fat, and the "excellent life" of capitalism in which the social-democratic parties grew up peacefully. This peaceful growth into capitalism depraved the social-democratic parties, converted them from organs of the

class struggle into appendages of the national bourgeoisie. Having attached themselves like leeches to capitalism, they could no longer conceive of the violent overthrow of capitalism, and they learned to look on revolution as a "catastrophe". The chains which they should have lost were forged out of gold, and out of terror at the possibility of losing these golden chains arose the *ideology of defense*, their attachment to gains within the limits of capitalism. And the Linz Program of social-democracy advocated the ideology of defense. In this program violence was recognized as the last means of defense. The idea of revolution became converted into the fatal idea of awaiting the attacks of counter revolution and the idea of the armed insurrection into the fatal idea of armed defense. Otto Bauer, the author of the Linz Program, was free from the more or less coarse or refined corruption which is inseparable from the peaceful growth into capitalism, but nevertheless he became the ideologist of social-democracy which had passed through its petty-bourgeois degeneration.

He lived like a Puritan. He came to socialism, to the working class, by conviction. But, at the bottom of his soul, he did not believe in the historic role of the proletariat.

This unusual person always overestimated the forces of the enemy, and always underestimated the forces of the proletariat. He was a prisoner of his enormous bourgeois erudition, and while investigating the world of capitalism, of bourgeois philosophy and bourgeois science down to their ultimate ramifications, inwardly he was isolated from the masses. He saw himself faced by capitalism, in all its enormous growth, a force many times superior to the proletariat in its weapons of power, its political possibilities, and its intellectual reserves. How could the proletariat, which had neither the arms nor the education of the enemy, overthrow this world and dictate its laws to this world? Otto Bauer calculated all the difficulties and dangers facing this undertaking and summed up the results in the word "impossible". For he did not include the revolutionary creative power of the working class in his calculation. The founder of Austro-Marxism, Victor Adler, put into currency a saying: "The brain is an organ of delay". And in reality the brain of his pupil Otto Bauer acted exclusively as an organ of delay. This brain forever calculated "The time has not yet come. But possibly, when we obtain 51 per cent of the total votes . . . possibly when we have a million members of the party . . . possibly when capitalism itself capitulates to its contradictions . . . possibly when a new world war shakes continents . . . possibly, if. . . . But one thing is certain, the time has not yet come!" In every decisive situation the following fatal methods of calculation were applied, namely, the discords among

the parties of counter revolution, the relation of forces between the imperialist States, the Czech government, the French government, all these circumstances became items in this bill. Only one factor was left out of account, and that was the proletariat. The criticism to which Otto Bauer subjected the revolutionary workers is noteworthy. He said: "This absence of any level is frightful. These people have no level whatever. It is impossible to fight on such a level." Yes, the starving unemployed who came out against him were without the level of the highly educated politicians. But their class instinct did not deceive them. This class instinct told them a thousand times better what to do. It was a better adviser than the highly educated politicians. But Otto Bauer did not believe in this class instinct, he believed in his highly educated intellect.

We are not speaking here of the "psychology of the leaders", but of exposing the essence of Austro-Marxism by using the example of its ideologist. Austro-Marxism is a *most subtle manifestation of lack of faith in the proletariat, and of the economic fatalism arising therefrom*, which hinders the revolution of the European working class and clears the path for fascism. Austro-Marxism scotched the revolution in Austria and gave birth to fascism. Otto Bauer was not a "traitor", but his policy inevitably ended in the betrayal of the interests of the proletariat. This policy inevitably ended in the fact that naked, shameless reformism triumphed over all revolutionary phraseology, that the reformists in Austrian social-democracy, and Otto Bauer with them, were prepared to tolerate fascism on the basis of a papal encyclical, and to give the Dollfuss Government the right to rule "authoritatively" for two years and to pay any price so as to restrain the revolutionary revolt of the proletariat.

#### THE SCHUTZBUND

How then, in spite of all this, did it come about that events developed as far as a revolutionary rising, as far as the heroic Schutzbund revolt?

The duplicity of Austro-Marxism, which had taken on a revolutionary appearance in order to frighten the bourgeoisie and keep the proletariat in the ranks of social-democracy, and which simultaneously had decided never to carry out the revolution, making its date dependent on all kinds of "ifs", this duplicity was transferred from the sphere of ideology into the sphere of organization. The party was an electoral alliance which could only function in democratic conditions. The republican Schutzbund, consisting of well-armed, well-trained, working class formations, was pressed into this electoral alliance. Austrian social-democracy which had had the military forces of the Republic under its control up till 1920, needed to cover its rear in a military sense so as to continue its special policy



and not be converted into a reformist party of the type of German social-democracy. When the armed forces were transformed into the weapon of the bourgeoisie, the Schutzbund became the military force covering the rear of social-democracy. The Schutzbund linked the boldest and most radical workers to the party, forced them to military discipline, and kept them far away from politics. The Schutzbund had no political weight in the party, but was looked on as the praetorian guard of the Central Committee. In spite of this the existence of the Schutzbund forced Austrian social-democracy to resort to measures which were a source of disquiet to all reformists. It is true that the Schutzbund was isolated from the masses, and in all critical situations was not to act but to "be prepared for action", i.e., was not to interfere in the events. Nonetheless, it had to be supplied with weapons, and it had, willy-nilly, to be trained in the spirit of armed conflict with counter revolution. Of course, the ideology of defense was hammered into the heads of the Schutzbund members, but when the crisis revolutionized the entire proletariat, the Schutzbund became revolutionized more rapidly and thoroughly than the other members of the party.

#### THE RADICALIZATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

After the coup d'état brought about by Austrian fascism in March, 1933, this radicalization went on at a powerful and irresistible speed. The clearly pronounced reformists had long since demanded the dissolution of the Schutzbund. They understood quite well that it was the very existence of the Schutzbund which seriously threatened the reformist character of the party and not revolutionary phraseology, that this armed section of the proletariat was an alien body in the democratic electoral alliance. The more intense the crisis became, the greater was the disquiet caused to them by this boasted unity of the working class within the ranks of social-democracy. They said: "Let us form a barrier between us and the radical elements: Let us liberate the party from the camouflaged Communists! Better lose 10,000 workers than permit a catastrophe to take place." But Austro-Marxism could not abandon the unity of the working class within the bounds of social-democracy because it would thereby have repudiated itself.

Unity was preserved. But this unity rendered more and more concessions to the radicalized workers necessary, made necessary concessions to the Schutzbund who were energetically preparing for armed defense. While the open reformists were for the dissolution of the Schutzbund, for unconditional capitulation, and consequently for a split, the stubborn Austro-Marxists hoped to tear concessions from the government by using the threat of civil war. It seemed to some of the Austro-Marxists that even

if a few Schutzbund units were set into motion, this would be turned into a means of scaring the government and giving social-democracy a firm reputation as being the savior of Austria from revolution. "Playing at revolt", which Lenin ever warned against, poisoned the policy of Austro-Marxism. *Putschism proved to be the organic supplement of reformism.* The internal contradictions of Austro-Marxism increased to the point of absurdity.

#### OATHS OF LIBERTY AND A PARLIAMENTARY FARCE

Immediately after March 5, 1933, the "unity" of the party was, apparently, brought about for the last time. The people trusted by social-democracy unanimously decided to enter the struggle. The C.C. unanimously declared that parliament would assemble on March 15, at 3 p. m. in defiance of the will of the government. The forcible dissolution of parliament would mean a general strike and civil war. March 15 arrived. The Schutzbund was mobilized as the forcible dissolution of parliament was inevitable, it was to have entered into battle at 4 p. m. The party members were gathered in the party building and all the factories waited for the slogan of the general strike. The social-democratic deputies were all of a tremble, expecting this time to see revolutionary words converted into deeds. Austro-Marxism fell into the snare of its own methods and was near to being involved in revolution against its will, and against its very essence. But at the last moment—the very last moment—it nevertheless succeeded in avoiding unexpected consequences. One practical politician proposed to all the other practical politicians: "What will happen if we open the session not at 3 o'clock but at 2.30? Nothing. At 3 o'clock the police will come. But at 3 o'clock everything will be ready." The session took place and the government made a fool of itself. With all the speed they were capable of, the deputies rushed excitedly into the parliament chamber, played at parliament as speedily as they could, and when the police arrived the comedy was over.

The deputies had a good laugh over this comical story and scattered to the party buildings, but the workers did not laugh at all. When the Schutzbund members, who were standing under arms, were told that the retreat was sounded, many of them threw down their weapons and tore up their party cards. In many places in a single day the membership dwindled by one third. *The illusion of unity was dispelled. The liquidation of the party began.*

#### REVOLUTIONARY DISARMAMENT AND MILITARY ARMAMENT

So as not to lose tens of thousands of the best and boldest proletarians, so as not to pronounce the death sentence on itself, Austro-Marxism was com-

pelled to hinder the disintegration of the Schutzbund. It was no longer able to win over the members of the Schutzbund by revolutionary phrases, and was forced energetically to arm them, give them the line of revolutionary defense. The internal contradictions of Austro-Marxism grew tremendously. "The masses failed us. Why did they not go out to Ringstrasse?" said the very people who branded the initiative of the masses as a criminal violation of discipline after July 15, 1927, and who kept the masses in the party buildings on March 15, 1933. "The anger of the people has not grown sufficiently yet. We must wait for a still stronger outburst of the people's anger!" said the very people who had quenched the anger of the people with fire hoses on July 15, 1927, and who tried to head off the anger of the people by playing a pitiful comedy on March 15, 1933. And they went out to seek the anger of the people. At all meetings they depicted the horrors of civil war. They spoke of the catastrophe which would leave a heap of ruins behind it. They warned and they threatened: "If we begin a revolution, the Germans, Italians and Hungarians will invade Austria." Are these the sentiments with which to rouse the anger of the masses of the people? Are these the sentiments with which to prepare for revolution? "The workers are not yet revolutionary enough. They do not want to fight!" said the very people who branded everyone as fools and saboteurs who advocated revolutionary struggle. The very people who condemned partial actions because it was necessary to "preserve all forces for the decisive struggle", who suppressed the strike movement because they feared that the struggle might "go too far", were the ones to use these phrases now. *Side by side with the political disarmament of the masses there took place the arming of the Schutzbund.*

The very same speakers who frightened the masses with all the horrors of civil war, said to the Schutzbund members: "Civil war is inevitable but we are not yet well enough prepared." The very same politicians who implanted into the minds of considerable sections of the proletariat the conviction that the struggle was hopeless, strengthened the conviction among the Schutzbund that an armed rising would sweep away the government. Such was the unity of the working class within the framework of social-democracy. The party organism decayed under the thin veneer of this unity. The reformist group around Renner and Scheidemann undertook a policy at their own risk and sabotaged the Schutzbund in Lower Austria, and made a declaration to the Christian Social Party to the effect that they did not approve the conduct of the "Judases" in the C.C. and in the *Arbeiterzeitung*. The leaders of the Schutzbund undertook a policy of their own kind and

wanted to organize a putsch and to establish a military dictatorship by the Schutzbund. Some of the trade union leaders carried on a policy, again of their own kind, while the struggle of the Left opposition against the C.C. became more intense and passionate week by week. Social-democracy existed only as the shell of an organization, as a heap of rubbish barring the path to revolution.

#### THE LEFT OPPOSITION

Not only did wide sections of the working masses revolt against this curbing of the revolution, but so also did the Left opposition, organized as a fraction. In this Left opposition there were many opinions, many contradictions, many illusions, but nevertheless all its members were in favor of the revolutionary class struggle, armed insurrection, and stood for the dictatorship of the proletariat. All its members fought honestly against the policy of toleration, the policy of waiting, and against Austro-Marxist fatalism. All its members were full of honest determination to carry out the program of Communism. But this will to Communism was not yet linked up with the decision to shake themselves loose of all social-democratic prejudices. And although this will to Communism mobilized ever broader sections of the proletariat, the social-democratic prejudices restricted the political arena of action of the Left opposition. In spite of this unsatisfactory mixture of theoretical consciousness and tactical timidity, of the denial of social-democracy in principle and the recognition of it in practice, the Left opposition ideologically prepared the armed insurrection and influenced the decision of the revolutionary members of the Schutzbund. The Left opposition was capable of going ahead of the masses. But it was not capable of leading them.

#### DEFEAT

And Otto Bauer? He, and the few who as hitherto continued to hold to the conceptions of Austro-Marxism, fatalistically awaited defeat. Their disbelief in the power of the proletariat was converted into the completely despairing conviction that "We are in a counter-revolutionary situation. In this situation fascism is advancing irresistibly and invincibly. Whatever we may do will be a mistake and will have fatal consequences. Right up to the last minute we shall try to come to an agreement with counter revolution, although we consider this agreement to be impossible. At the last minute we shall throw ourselves into the fight, although we consider victory to be impossible. We shall die with honor." All that remained of Austro-Marxism was the gloomy sense of doom and internal capitulation to dying capitalism. The homunculus helplessly crumbled to dust, while revolution rose in a powerful wave.



Austro-Marxism expected defeat, and it is to blame for the defeat precisely because it expected it. For 15 years it held back the revolution, and it fell at the moment when it was already impossible to hold the revolution back.

Yes, the Austrian proletariat was defeated. But this defeat was more fruitful and more creative than all the successes achieved by Austro-Marxism. On the third day of the fighting, one of the Schutzbund men said: "This defeat has been necessary. The up-

rising has finished, but the revolution has begun". This was the opinion not merely of one Schutzbund man, but was the feeling of all the revolutionary workers in Austria. They are not downcast. They do not feel themselves beaten. They have begun to prepare for the revolution. *Austro-Marxism is dead, but the mighty, proud and invincible Austrian proletariat lives. Austro-Marxism has fallen and the path is open. This path leads to the new revolutionary unity of the working class in the Communist Party.*

## THE FEBRUARY STRUGGLE IN AUSTRIA AND ITS LESSONS

By Bela Kun

A penetrating analysis of the February, 1934, uprising of the Austrian workers. The revolutionary crisis, the relation of class forces in the struggle, the treacherous policy of Austro-Marxism, the defeat of the struggle due to its *defensive* character, tactical lessons, etc., are presented with Marxist-Leninist clarity and thoroughness by the leader of the Hungarian revolution of 1919. ¶ The material in this pamphlet on the contradictions within the bourgeois camp throws strong light on the recent outbreak between Hitler-fascism and Mussolini-fascism for control of Austria.

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## SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY — STEPPING-STONE TO FACSISM

or

### OTTO BAUER'S LATEST DISCOVERY

By D. Z. Manuilsky

This pamphlet takes the form of a reply to the political report which Otto Bauer made to one of the last congresses of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party. In it Comrade Manuilsky traverses the whole field of Democracy and Dictatorship, Fascism and Parliament, Reforms and "Public Control", Reaction and Revolution, comparing the Russian and Austrian paths, and concluding with the position of the Communist International on the united front with social-democracy—leaders or rank and file. ¶ *The fact that since this address was delivered, Austria has finally succumbed to the fascist menace, makes this pamphlet prophetic.*

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# THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

By SAM BROWN

THE National Convention of the American Socialist Party held in Detroit, June 1-3, in the midst of a raging strike wave, moved to the "Left". The Convention adopted a "Left" declaration of principles which will be voted upon by the entire membership in a special referendum. The newly elected Executive Committee is composed in its majority of representatives of the "Left" groupings. The open Right Wing has declared war upon the adopted declaration of principles. It has already created within the Socialist Party an organization of its own for the purpose of defeating the declaration of principles in the membership referendum.

The fight between the open Right Wing and the groups around Norman Thomas and the "Lefts" represented by the Revolutionary Policy Committee was quite violent. The Right Wing made speeches and the atmosphere at the Convention was very tense with rumors of splits, etc. The resolution introduced by the Revolutionary Policy Committee, which contained a clause in favor of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", was defeated by the slender majority of 513 votes out of 16,715 recorded. The Revolutionary Policy Committee then abandoned its own resolution and together with the Norman Thomas Centrists passed the declaration of principles.

In a nutshell, what is this declaration of principles? The declaration still stresses democracy and pacifism (shades of Norman Thomas). However, should democratic means fail, then the declaration of principles proceeds to make violent threats that it will resort to revolutionary methods of struggle (shades of the program of the Revolutionary Policy Committee).

We will give a few typical quotations from the declaration of principles:

"In its struggles for a new society, the Socialist Party seeks to attain its objectives by *peaceful and orderly means* . . . but it unhesitatingly applies itself to the task of *replacing the bogus democracy* of capitalist parliamentarism by a genuine workers' democracy. Capitalism is doomed. If it can be superceded by a majority vote, the Socialist Party will rejoice. If the crisis comes through the denial of majority rights after the electorate has given us a mandate, we shall not hesitate to crush by our labor solidarity the reckless forces of reaction and to consolidate the Socialist State. If the capitalist system should collapse in a gen-

eral chaos and confusion, which cannot permit of orderly procedure, the Socialist Party, whether or not in such a case it is a majority, will not shrink from the responsibility of organizing and maintaining a government under the workers' rule. True democracy is a worthy means to progress; but true democracy must must be created by the workers of the world." (Our emphasis—S. B.)

The above concluding paragraph from the declaration of principles is typical of the spirit and content of the entire declaration. They, the new S.P. leadership, continue to emphasize and sow the illusion of bourgeois democracy, but the membership is rapidly becoming disillusioned and therefore the declaration also promises revolutionary methods of struggle. The declaration also expresses itself in favor of the general strike in case of war and fascism. Of course, only after all peaceful means have failed!

The Right Wing, which carried on the fight for "orthodox democratic socialism", denounces the declaration of principles as a Communist statement. In a declaration published in the *New York Times*, Louis Waldman, one of the outstanding leaders of the Right Wing, stated that:

"The declaration of principles Mr. Thomas sponsored, and which temporarily, at least, stands as the party's program, is perhaps, less frank but not one bit less dangerous, than the doctrines of the Communists."

The Right Wing in the referendum discussion, which is already raging in the *New Leader*, continues to denounce the declaration of principles as a Communist statement and takes particular exception to the sections dealing with war and fascism which advocate the use of the general strike and sabotage of war.

The resolution of the Convention on the N.R.A. is a reversal of the previous position of the Socialist Party on the N.R.A. Here, one sees again the pressure of the rank and file which was at the bottom of the "Left" moves at the Socialist Party Convention. It is well to recall that when the N.R.A. was inaugurated, the Socialist Party leadership as one, regardless of groupings, hailed the N.R.A. But the Convention met at the time when the disillusionment was reaching its highest point.

Their N.R.A. resolution still, of course, repeats the idea that "the chief benefit was the impetus it [the N.R.A.] gave to the labor organization". However, the Convention N.R.A. resolution is al-



most a polemic against their original position on the N.R.A.

Thomas said in the honeymoon days of the N.R.A., that the "N.R.A. is a step towards genuine socialism"; the resolution says now that "The N.R.A. is not a step towards Socialism". The Socialist Party spoke of the N.R.A. as State capitalism leading to the peaceful development of socialism. Their N.R.A. resolution, however, now states that:

"First of all the State machinery is being utilized to set up codes. It is State intervention in economic affairs, but not every form of State intervention is Socialism. The depends entirely on who controls the State and the purpose of intervention. The present State is in effect the executive committee of the ruling class." Norman Thomas said, "Now is not the time to strike". The resolution declares that "... In the first place no limitations of any kind must be permitted on the right to strike". Finally, reflecting the recognition on the part of the workers of the strike-breaking role of the N.R.A. boards, the resolution declares, with a little joker in it:

"The Socialist Party holds it to be contrary to the interests of our movement for members of the party to serve on administrative, compliance and labor boards of the N.R.A. . . ." And here it leaves the door open when it says, "... unless expressly chosen by the workers and designated to represent them".

How great was the pressure of the rank and file on the atmosphere of the Convention can be seen even from this "little" incident as described by the socialist *New Leader* itself:

"The convention voted, amidst much cheering, to restore recognition of the class struggle to the application blank for party membership". [The class struggle clause was eliminated at the 1928 convention of the S.P.]

Such, in brief, is the picture of the Convention itself.

\* \* \*

Wherein lies the significance of the S.P. Convention, what are the lessons the Communist Party must draw from this Convention, what was the role of the C.P. prior to the Convention, during the Convention and immediately after the Convention? In order to answer these fundamental questions it is necessary at first to discuss the background of the Socialist Party Convention.

The Socialist Party has been in a profound crisis. It has been subject to the same forces which brought about the growing bankruptcy of the Second International. In the United States the position of the Socialist Party on the N.R.A. has added considerably to the growing dissatisfaction of the rank and file with the leadership of the party. The membership compared the fruits of the policy of the

"lesser evil" in Europe to the support given by the Socialist Party to the N.R.A. and Roosevelt.

The growth of dissatisfaction within the Socialist Party was by no means an automatic process. The activities of the Communist Party in applying the policy of the united front to the Socialist Party, have been a great factor in deepening the crisis within the Socialist Party. The S.P. leaders felt the growing influence of our Party. The position of the Socialist Party against the united front on the one hand, while the rank-and-file membership were in support of the united front on the other hand, sharpened the situation within the S.P.

The crisis within the S.P. has brought to life the groupings which played their role at the Convention. Briefly, what are their platforms, what layers of the S.P. membership do they represent?

It is necessary to consider first the Revolutionary Policy Committee, since they influenced a large number of the delegates who are connected with the rank and file of the S.P. The R.P.C., in its program, which is essentially reformist, called for the "transformation of capitalist society into socialist society by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat". But they hasten to announce that they have nothing to do with Communists. The committee declared that "... the Left tendency in the international Socialist movement does not lead to Communism; it leads away from Communism as well as away from reformism; its motto is back to revolutionary socialism". What, then, is the real purpose of these high-sounding declarations? The answer is obvious. The R.P.C. itself tells us that its purpose is: "To stay within and transform the Socialist Party and make it follow revolutionary socialism".

These socialist workers who are now turning away from reformism must not be allowed to turn towards Communism! This is the gist of the program of the R.P.C. How could they best succeed in their task? Only if they convince the dissatisfied socialist workers that the S.P. can be transformed into an organ of "revolutionary socialism". Thus it hopes to "lead the socialist workers away from Communism". This is the meaning and significance of the recent "Left" swing at the S.P. Convention.

The R.P.C. is connected with the younger members of the Party, with those who joined the Party since the crisis. Though itself composed in the main of intellectuals, the R.P.C., whose program is "militant industrial unionism", is connected with the native-born industrial workers of the Socialist Party. It was this section of the S.P. membership that responded best to the united front appeals of the Communist Party. No wonder, then, that the R.P.C. speaks "boldly" in favor of united front actions. It called for "ceaseless efforts toward united actions against common enemies with recognition of the

right to differences of opinion and free criticism of the large program of the participating elements".

Norman Thomas attempts to represent a Centrist position. In rejecting the point in the R.P.C. program in favor of the dictatorship of the proletariat, his explanation for doing so was "that the Party would sign its own death warrant by such a declaration". However, he did not merely stop here. At the same time he declared that he can find "some merited points" in the program of the Revolutionary Policy Committee. Thomas also comes out in favor of the united front, though not as boldly as the R.P.C. As late as April 6 he wrote in *The World Tomorrow* that: "The various committees which pass on party tactics must not take the position that never can we have any intercourse with Communists or near Communists in strikes or other emergencies". Thomas is the mass leader of the S.P. He is connected with the large sections of the workers who are the followers of the S.P. He is well attuned to the moods of the socialist workers. And in a moment of both frankness and despair he let the cat out of the bag, telling why under certain conditions he favors united front actions with the Communists. A few months ago he stated:

"I have recently been traveling rather extensively in New England and elsewhere and know that in our own party and outside of it we shall suffer very considerable harm if we can be made to appear to be blocking any kind of united front actions. Frankly, I am sceptical whether the Communists will undertake united action on honorable terms. But for the sake of our own members, *especially our younger people*, it must be made obvious that it is they who sabotage the united front and not we who disdainfully reject it".

Indeed, a very frank statement!

The open Right Wing in the Socialist Party, headed by the old guard, has as its platform, democratic socialism. It is actually white-guardist in its attitude towards the Soviet Union. In a specially prepared pamphlet for the Convention, called *Hear the Other Side, A Symposium of Democratic Socialist Opinion*, Abe Cahan wrote as follows:

"The slums of the Russian cities and their voiceless terrorized inhabitants, on the one hand, and the glorious municipal socialism of Vienna [!] with the free speech and free voting it guaranteed, on the other hand, is the difference between despotic Bolshevism and democratic socialism".

No comments are necessary here. It gives a picture of the old guard. The Right Wing is based mainly on the oldest members of the Party, chiefly foreign-born. The Right Wing is connected with the most corrupt sections of the bureaucrats in the

needle trades unions. The Right Wing is most viciously opposed to any form of united front actions with the Communists. Louis Waldman, one of its chief leaders, declared that the "united front is incompatible with S.P. policy of working within the A. F. of L. and about being a part of a Farmer Labor Party."

The groupings closest to the rank and file in the Party and to the socialist workers at large, parade with "Left" phrases. What is most significant, however, is that they are also compelled to differentiate themselves from the Right Wing by their attitude toward the united front.

We have considered the events at the Convention of the Socialist Party and the conditions existing within the S.P. prior to and on the eve of the Convention. Wherein lies, then, the significance of the S. P. Convention? First of all, the Convention revealed the deep-going ferment of the rank and file within the party, the existence of genuine Left Wing sentiments *among the membership* and their *urge for united actions*. Secondly, in order to retain influence over the Socialist Party and stop the growing attraction of the Socialist Party workers to the Communist Party, the leadership swung the S.P. Convention to the "Left". Thirdly, the growing fascization in the country has crystalized the Right Wing as the most open social-fascist wing in the Socialist Party. Such are the main conclusions.

\* \* \*

In view of what happened at the Socialist Party Convention, the question naturally arises as to what was the role of the Communist Party, whether the hand of our Party was felt in the proceedings of the S.P. Convention. Unfortunately we must say that the *direct* influence of the C.P. was not felt at the Convention. And it is precisely the absence of this direct influence of the C.P. which enabled Norman Thomas and the R.P.C. leadership to deceive with their "Left" phrases the rank-and-file delegates and membership.

What are some of the reasons for the inactivity of the Party in connection with the Convention? When we will recall some of the estimates of our Party on the eve of the S.P. Convention and the activities of the Communist Party, then the answer will be quite clear.

Let us, for instance, consider a leading article in the June issue of *The Communist* entitled "What Is to be Expected of the Socialist Party Convention?" by Martin Young. The article was written on the eve of the S.P. Convention and the opening paragraph of the article contains the following estimate:

"The Socialist Party will not emerge from its Detroit Convention as 'the effective instrument for bringing about socialism' hoped for by the Re-



volutionary Policy Committee. If any changes do take place *it will be more to the Right*, and more in harmony with the interests of American capitalism. The official resolutions of the various socialist state and city organizations indicate this. The political orientation of the S.P. for the next two years to be adopted by its convention, is outlined in the latest book of Norman Thomas, *The Choice Before Us*, which he advanced as 'the socialist program.' [Thomas in his recent book praised the New Deal and the N.R.A.]

As we see, the estimate in this article is that the S.P. will at its Detroit Convention move "more to the Right". What has actually happened? The S.P. Convention moved more to the "Left". Officially, "the political orientation of the S.P. for the next two years" is not the Norman Thomas program contained in his book, *The Choice Before Us*. On the contrary.

What is the explanation for the wrong estimate contained in the June issue of *The Communist*? It is explained, first of all, by the recently developed greater isolation of our Party from the rank and file in the Socialist Party and from the socialist workers in the country. Had we known how the bottom of the Socialist Party moves, and had we not merely looked at the top, our conclusions would be different than those contained in the quoted article. In establishing our estimate it was necessary to consider the live processes shaping themselves in the S.P. and in the country. If this were our approach, would it not then be clearer that a section of the S.P. leadership would energetically develop a high sounding "Left" program in order to retain the faith of the membership in the Socialist Party as an organ "of revolutionary socialism"?

We have in many respects considered the R.P.C. as a small New York group. Supposing it was. But why did it succeed in playing quite a leading role in the S.P. Convention? Precisely because of the widespread militant sentiments of the S.P. membership on the very eve of the Convention. It was necessary, first of all, to have this in mind when we estimated the strength of the Revolutionary Policy Committee. Then the S.P. Convention was scheduled to be held not only following the crisis within the whole Second International, but also at the time of the greatest disillusionment with the N.R.A. and on the very eve of the greatest militant upsurge of the American working class since 1919. Was not all this bound to have an influence on the temper and proceedings at the S.P. Convention?

Thomas may have written a book still praising the New Deal. But Thomas has his ear to the ground and he knows how to adjust himself. There is no contradiction between the S.P. leaders acting "more in harmony with the interests of American capitalism" and their present "Left" maneuvers. In-

deed, we must see more the dynamics of the developments. Had we had the correct estimate and not a sectarian approach, we could have developed a most energetic united front campaign, prior to and during the S.P. Convention. *This is the crux of the whole problem.*

The above mentioned article in the June issue of *The Communist* contains a no less serious error. Basing itself on Norman Thomas' call to the S.P. to work amongst the petty bourgeoisie and white collar workers, the article comes to the conclusion that "*from now on the S.P. will orientate itself on the white collar workers*". Of course, we must understand the meaning of Thomas' call. But it is absolutely wrong to draw the conclusion that the main orientation of the S.P. will be "on the white collar workers". On the contrary, more and more has the S. P. been orientating itself on the industrial workers and it has become very active on the trade union field. At no time since 1914, has the S.P. been so consciously orientated towards the economic trade union field as it is today. And certainly the recent S.P. Convention, as no S.P. Convention since the war, has taken up the organization of the unorganized and its activities in the A. F. of L. as its chief task. This attitude of the S.P. on trade union work must receive the main attention of the Communist Party in its present approach to the Socialist Party.

In the declaration of principles, the Convention declared that:

"It is the duty of every Socialist wage worker to be a loyal and active member of the union in his industry or trade, and to strive for the strengthening and solidifying of the trade union movement. It is the duty and privilege of the Socialist press to aid the unions in their struggles for better wages, increased leisure, and conditions of employment."

The Convention also adopted a special resolution on Socialist Party Policy in the trade unions (which should be thoroughly analyzed), which reads in part:

"Socialists should assist in organizing the unorganized and encourage the formation of unions in such industries. Party members who do organization work apart from the A. F. of L. should recommend that unions so formed should apply to the A. F. of L. Where all efforts at affiliation have been exhausted, our members may recommend that the unions so formed remain independent."

It is clear that the main orientation of the S.P. will not be on "the white collar workers".

It is very significant that the Socialist Party held a special pre-convention trade union conference with 100 delegates present. From the *New Leader* account of this conference, we learn that:

"One of the most interesting reports was that on the Toledo strike given by Elmer E. Ledford, state chairman of the Ohio Socialists. Ledford is one of the committee of 23 handling the strike and was particularly active in lining up the support of other unions for the Auto-Lite strikers [!] . . . Sarah Limbach, state secretary of the Pennsylvania Socialists, gave a graphic account of conditions in the general steel strike scheduled for June 16. . . . The conference listened with great interest to an account of conditions in the Detroit automobile industry by Mathew Smith, Socialist Party member who is general secretary of the Mechanics Educational Society which has waged several successful strikes in Michigan auto factories."

The new national chairman of the Socialist Party is vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers now affiliated with the A. F. of L. Another new member of the national executive committee of the Socialist Party is the President of the Montana State Federation of Labor. In the strike wave in the month of May, leading members of the Socialist Party occupied leading positions in the various strikes as, for instance, in the heroic strike of the Toledo workers, which was shamefully betrayed by the A. F. of L. with the aid of the S.P. and Muste leaders.

Certainly had we been more conscious of the role of the S.P. in these strike struggles we would have been far more pressing in our united front proposals at the S.P. Convention. Again we must say that this is the crux of the problem.

What was the result of the mistake of the Party? with the Socialist Party Convention? If we are to judge by the *Daily Worker*, the Party has taken insufficient interest in the Socialist Party Convention. For the entire month of May there appeared only one editorial on the Socialist Party and about four articles which dealt with the program of the Revolutionary Policy Committee and the Right Wing.

On May 26, the *Daily Worker* published the Central Committee Open Letter addressed to the "Socialist Party Membership and the Delegates at the Convention". This Open Letter made a united front appeal and concluded with a call for joint struggles on specific issues. This call was, in effect, the only approach of our Party to the S.P. at the time of the Convention. The attitude of the Party was too much of a *formal and manifesto character*.

What should have determined our approach to the Socialist Party Convention? First of all, the recognition as to what is the source of the dissatisfaction and the genuine Left move of the rank and file in the S.P. The source of these Left moves is the anxiety of the rank-and-file membership to struggle against the daily attacks of American capitalism, to struggle against the Roosevelt administra-

tion. The new S.P. leadership hopes to pacify the rebellious rank and file with "Left" phrases and program and at the same time keep them from daily struggles. What should have been our strategy to involve the rank and file in struggles and through such struggles expose the Centrist "Left" maneuvers of the leadership and establish who really wants to struggle against the attacks of capitalism? This could be accomplished only through a more persistent application of the policy of the united front. The Party, therefore, should have, prior to the Convention, made concrete united front proposals to the National Committee of the S.P. and particularly to the local organizations. This the Party did not do.

We should have addressed ourselves particularly in favor of the united front. We should have developed, so to say, a conversation with the R.P.C., which their rank and file would understand. For instance, "you claim that you are Lefts, very well, the first test is, whether you are ready to join in united front struggles *now* against the growing attacks of capitalism; to join in united action for unemployment insurance, against the terror, and the strike wave, etc.; what is more, in your program you declare yourselves in favor of the united front, certainly now is the time and we are therefore making definite proposals for joint actions. Will you join us, will you at your Socialist Party Convention fight for a united front with us?" Such a line the Party did not adopt.

What was the result of the mistake of the Party? After very successful united front actions of the C.P. with the local organizations of the S.P., united front actions which helped create the crisis in the S.P., the united front was no issue at the S.P. Convention.

The dominant leadership at the Convention deliberately sabotaged the united front issue. This, despite their many statements in favor of the united front. They pressed forward an abstract "Left" discussion in order to avoid any discussion on the real issues of the daily struggles, on the question of the united front. They could, therefore, more easily deceive the membership with their abstract and wrong presentation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, etc., than if they were confronted with the issues of immediate united front struggles. The united front should have stood in the center of the S.P. Convention discussion, such should have been our tactic. The estimate of the Convention, however, and our approach to the various grouping within the S.P., allowed the "Left" groupings to maneuver with greater ease.

What was the estimate of the Communist Party and the line of action directly after the S.P. Convention? The *Daily Worker* of June 7, in a leading editorial entitled "The S.P. 'Revolutionary Declaration'", estimated the Convention as follows:



"Through the Socialist Party Convention, just ended, there jotted one huge dominating factor—the real, rapidly growing revolutionary consciousness of the masses and a growing impatience of the rank and file in the Socialist Party with the policies of the leadership."

Here the estimate is different than the earlier estimate contained in the June issue of *The Communist*.

Another editorial on June 8, in taking up Thomas' position, tends to lump together the Right Wing and the Norman Thomas & R.P.C. bloc. The error of both editorials is the absence of any united front appeal and approach.

On June 12 there already appeared a leading editorial in the *Daily* entitled "Towards United Action". This editorial contained an earnest united front appeal. Our Party is also acting; the Central Committee made united front proposals to the newly elected national committee of the Socialist Party. These proposals call for joint struggles, for unemployment insurance, for higher wages, farm relief, against Negro oppression, against war and fascism. The C.P. united front proposals stressed the need for joint struggles in the factories and trade unions on all the questions affecting the workers. The letter of the Central Committee to the S.P. makes the special point that many members of the newly elected Executive Committee have in the past expressed themselves in favor of the united front.

It is in the localities directly amongst the membership where the whole weight of our united front proposals is being placed. The local organizations of the Communist Party, encouraged by the Central Committee, must display the greatest initiative in approaching the local organizations of the S.P. And certainly in every factory and trade union there are many local grievances and issues which can become the basis for the development of joint united front struggles. These local issues should be connected with the main national issues of struggle, such as unemployment insurance, the Industrial Adjustment Bill, etc. It is well to remember that in the localities, many followers of the R.P.C. are sincere in their united front attitude. Contact with these members of the Socialist Party can serve as a great stimulus in developing united front action. We must learn to seek them out.

The entire membership of the S.P. is at present agitated and deeply interested in the referendum. We must be careful not to take a light-minded attitude towards the referendum. We must help the rank-and-file membership of the S.P. We know that the new leadership, continuing their line at the Convention, will relegate to the background the question of the united front. We must try through comradely discussions and, above all, through actions,

to place the question of the united front in the very center of the referendum discussion.

Our Party for a while, has, so to say, slipped on the question of the united front and its attitude toward the S.P. But the recent action of the Central Committee shows that our Party is again on the road towards successes and winning the rank-and-file Socialist Party members for united front struggles against the offensive of capitalism.

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The recent Convention has once more emphasized the role and danger of American social-fascism. It is well to discuss briefly some of the basic problems in our attitude and struggle against American social-fascism. This is especially advisable as our Party has had relapses in its attitude toward the American Socialist Party.

We must learn to know the specific features and peculiar course of development of American social-fascism. What are some of these special features? In the United States, American social-fascism is not only affected by the crisis of the Second International but it also shows definite signs of growth. In this seeming contradiction we find the specific features in the recent development of American social-fascism. The reasons for the crisis are well known; they are fundamentally the same as in the Second International. What are the reasons for the growth of American social-fascism in the face of the fundamental forces which will increase the development of its crisis? The American working class is not proportionately as well organized on the economic trade union field as the European working class. The American Socialist Party does not enjoy at present the same influence as the social-democratic parties in the European countries, but merely to state this is not to explain the situation at all. The analysis becomes complete only then when we state that this occurs at the time of the end of capitalist stabilization, at a time of the greatest mass militant upsurge of the American working class and in a period of the growing influence of the Communist Party.

Here is where the key to the answer lies. The ruling class in such a highly industrialized country as the United States, with a working class capable of truly heroic struggles in defense of its daily interests, could not at the present moment carry through successfully its policy of reducing the standard of living of the masses without its agency in the ranks of the working class, without the aid of social-fascism. The ruling class, especially now, fears the presence and activities of the Communist Party in fields where it has no social-fascist agents. Because of the absence of a mass social-fascist party, as in Europe, and because of the absence (shall we rather say past absence) of a strong, organized, trade union movement



in the basic industries, our Party has for a while developed with comparative ease what we might call a monopolist position in organizing the unemployed and leading the first major strikes (coal, textile) at the beginning of the economic crisis.

It did not take long and we lost our so-called monopolist position on the unemployed field (of course, our mistakes are to be considered in the first place). Everybody took to organizing the unemployed. First the Mustetes, then the Socialist Party, the Trotskyites, Lovestoneites, etc. But of the greatest significance is what took place amongst the unorganized in the basic industries. For a long while we thought that the A. F. of L. will never organize the unorganized in the basic industries, that it will not "lead" strikes. And what does life show and teach us? The A. F. of L. not only is "leading" strikes at the present time and is striving to obtain the monopoly in this field but has been quite "successful" in organizing sections of the unorganized workers in the basic industries.

Why does the A. F. of L. "lead" strikes? Why does it organize the unorganized? Certainly not out of love for the workers. It is doing this precisely because of the fear of the ruling class, lest the Communist Party become the leading factor amongst the unorganized and striking workers. The more the workers were ready for organization, the more they resorted to the strike weapon, the more the leaders of the A. F. of L., for the first time in decades, moved into the unorganized fields and began to "lead" strikes. How great indeed was the danger for the ruling class to leave the field completely free to the activities of the Communist Party at the present moment. The ruling class does not depend on terror alone against the workers and its vanguard. It badly needed the increased and widened services of a social-fascist agency.

We know, not only from the decisions of the S.P., but also from their activities in the recent strikes, that it is on the trade union field that the S.P. will become most energetic. To fight and challenge the role of the Communist Party on the trade union field we find a growing rapprochement between the S.P. and the A. F. of L. leaders. In the recent strikes, where the workers have shown unparalleled militancy, the local leaders of the A. F. of L. did not always deceive the workers. They needed help and advice. They therefore called in their socialist brethren. With the present mood of the workers the A. F. of L. leaders are in need of a "Left" partnership. The Socialist Party leaders offer it. The desire and the need for the marriage is so great, that even the very mild resolution of criticism against the A. F. of L. leaders introduced at the S.P. Convention was "lost" in the shuffle of the great fight between the Right and "Left" leaders at the S.P.

Convention. The desire for closer working ties between the S.P. and the A. F. of L. leaders, as it developed at the recent S.P. Convention, increases the danger of social-fascism in the U.S.A. It constitutes a real threat to the militant leadership which our Party is giving to the militant struggles of the workers. Social-fascism is strengthening its forces in order to stifle the onward sweep of the militant struggles of the American working class.

The revolutionary upsurge of the American working class expresses itself at the present time in the strikes and the economic trade union struggles. That is why all the forces of social-fascism move into and concentrate on the economic trade union field. Not only is the Socialist Party increasing its activities. What is especially dangerous is the increased activity of the Mustetes, (Toledo, steel). Even the renegades have increased their activities on the trade union field (Minneapolis truck strike in which the Trotskyites played a leading part and in the needle trades where at the recent I.L.G.W.U. Convention Dubinsky introduced Lovestone as a guest speaker). At the S.P. Convention Muste and Lovestone were very active. The Party should draw the necessary lessons from this little incident.

It is on the economic trade union field where the Party will come face to face with social-fascism in all its varieties. It is in this field where the workers will learn to know who its friends and enemies are. It is on this field where at the present the main blows against social-fascism must be directed. It is therefore on the economic trade union field where we must learn most successfully to apply the policy of the united front.

The growth of social-fascism must not be wholly "blamed" on the "objective" forces. Did we clearly see the growth of the A. F. of L. and clearly understand the reasons for its growth, *were we sufficiently connected with the masses, was our work in the reformist unions sufficiently strengthened*, did we see and feel the growth of the A. F. of L.? Did we with the necessary Bolshevik keenness adjust ourselves to the new developments in the American labor movement? Undoubtedly, in comparison with the past, our Party has made real progress in connecting itself with layers of workers in the basic industries and in improving its work in the reformist unions (steel, marine, building trade). But when we compare the possibilities and the increased activities of our enemies we must say that *fundamentally* the Party did not come up to the tasks demanded of us by the new situation. When we consider the results of the S.P. Convention, the fundamental question is, did the S.P. leaders succeed in strengthening the illusion that the S.P. can be transformed into a party of "revolutionary socialism"? We believe that in a measure they did succeed.



We emphasized we must take note of the growth of social-fascism in the U.S.A. But we have already indicated that in the *present period* its growth is and *can* be limited and arrested. This growth is taking place in a period of the end of capitalist stabilization, when it becomes increasingly difficult for the bourgeoisie to maneuver (a leading section of the bourgeoisie insists on company unions *alone*, it cannot depend on A. F. of L. unions even when led by the bureaucrats). The growth is taking place in a period when the working class is fighting *despite* the wishes of the A. F. of L. leaders, and the workers can, if aided, quickly learn to know who their friends and enemies are. The American working class is also learning from the experiences of their European class brothers in their struggles against fascism and social-fascism. The lessons of Germany and Austria will not be in vain. Of course, the American workers must, through their own experiences, learn to know the role of social-fascism, but this does not mean that the majority of the American working class must go through first the "school" of social-fascism before it will accept the leadership of the Communist Party. The American workers must not, as some thought in the past, cross the bridge of social-fascism before they come to Communism. Our enemies know of the real opportunities our Party has in becoming a mass Party. That is why they fear us and organize against us. Bearing in mind in what period American social-fascism develops, whether social-fascism will grow depends in the first place on the leading role and *mass* activities of the Communist Party; concretely, on how well the Party will apply the policy of the united front.

At this stage, the united front is the dividing line in the labor movement. It means grouping the forces that are for struggle against the daily attacks of capitalism and growing fascist reaction against those forces in the labor movement that are supporting the capitalist offensive and paving the way for fascism. The united front is one of the surest weapons in our struggle against social-fascism and its growth in the U.S.A.

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The recent Convention of the Socialist Party and the present developments should help finally to liquidate all of the remnants of the Party's underestimation of the role of social-fascism. Our Party has on more than one occasion "sinned" in this respect.

A few facts from the past can illuminate the nature of some of the recent mistakes.

The thesis of the Seventh Convention of our Party held in 1930 adopted the following attitude towards the S.P.

"The Socialist Party as the representative of the petty shopkeepers is trying to counteract the transformation of the petty shopkeepers into a clerk of the chain store by organizing their forces into social-fascist troops of capitalism against the labor movement."

And the reporter for the Central Committee at the Convention stated:

"To become the defender of bourgeois democracy the S.P. had to become the most reactionary section of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie".

We did not then look on the S.P. as being a party which, in the main, attracts to itself working class elements.

In estimating the vote which the Socialist Party received in the 1932 presidential elections, the leading editorial in the *Daily Worker* wrote as follows:

"The returns indicate that their [S.P.] greatest gains were not among the workers, in the main, but chiefly in the middle class neighborhoods, among elements who were dissatisfied as a result of the crisis, were breaking away from the two-party system, but who nevertheless were not yet ready to go with the workers for a fundamental social change. This element was the majority among the Socialist Party voters".

Here again the mistake consisted of looking upon the S.P. in the main attracting to itself petty-bourgeois elements. The Party has corrected the estimation of the S.P. vote in the 1932 elections.

We can see that the attitude expressed in the June, 1934 issue of *The Communist* that "*From now on the S.P. will orientate itself to the white collar workers*" is an echo of the old mistakes.

Despite the occasional slips, the line of the Central Committee and its activities, were, in the main, correct. We were not passive observers as to what happened in the S.P. The united front activities of the Party following the C.I. Manifesto has in many respects brought excellent results. Our Party was a positive factor in the development of the crisis within the Socialist Party and our influence among the rank and file has increased a great deal.